48 REPRODUCTIONS
OF FINE ART
and
18 ARTICLES BY

ROBERT M. HUTCHINS
MAX BROD
GEORGES ROUAULT
HENRY MILLER
GILBERT HIGHET
DOROTHY PARKER
JAMES T. FARRELL
and others

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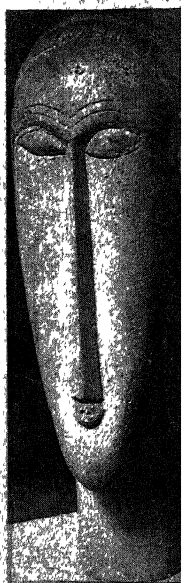

edited by
FERNANDO PUMA

7 arts

NUMBER THREE

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ABOUT THE EDITOR

FERNANDO PUMA, writer, artist and critic, directed a gallery of modern art for five years, and presented over two New York stations the first art review programs on radio. His book, *Modern Art Looks Ahead,* a history and analysis of painting and sculpture of the last seventy-five years, received an excellent reception in America. Also, *Love This Horizontal World,* a de luxe limited edition, was published in Paris.

Mr. Puma has exhibited his paintings in museums in many sections of the United States—the Detroit Institute of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Art, the Santa Barbara Museum, the Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington, D.C., the Minneapolis Institute of Art, University of Illinois. His paintings are included in many distinguished collections—Dr. W. R. Valentiner, Duncan Phillips, Sheldon Cheney, Dr. MacKinley Helm, Randolph Macon College, Dr. William Carlos Williams, Miss E. Hammond.

He has spent two and a half years traveling, painting and writing, in sixteen countries in Europe and the Near East. During September, 1949, an exhibition of his work was presented at the Gallery Mai in Paris. For the past year he has been residing in Paris, working on a novel.

7 ARTS

DANCE
MUSIC
THEATRE
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7 ARTS

NUMBER 3

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FERNANDO PUMA

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FOREWORD

In Europe there is, in spite of governmental strife and economic difficulty, still a deep respect for the man of broad interests, the dilettante, with overlapping but distinct abilities. Europeans feel life is richer and more exhilarating if people are multi-faceted or bi-lingual or vari-talented. The Humanistic Man must be nourished in America. Unfortunately, the broad approach to life is curtailed after college. We have become masters of turning the screw. The age of specialization suffocates *joie de vivre*. It is much better to acquaint oneself with many interests, a fan-wise spread for intellectual development.

One basic purpose behind *7 Arts* is the interrelation of the arts. How, for example, does the knowledge of the movements in the dance help a person in literature; or the appreciation of a texture or color in painting help a person to comprehend theatre? Why be aware of Aristotelian thoughts if you are a sculptor? Why notice the construction of Chartres if you compose music? It is necessary for the great creator to move afield. Rotation of crops is good for the soil and crops; and an awareness and understanding of all the arts helps the artist to surmount problems and to embrace his own art more graciously—perhaps contribute on a monumental level.

There are those creators who feel that *"art for art's sake"* is enough, that to pile up books in their studio

and play their compositions for their close friends is sufficient. Even if an artist is economically secure, he receives greater pleasure if he offers his art to the world and finds new friends, or incurs new enemies. Art is loving, and loving is giving and sharing. To encompass a world, to entertain, to stimulate, the creative artist knows this urge. The reaction works both ways and sparks creativity. By showing his children to the public, the artist tests their strength, their originality, their longevity, and their contribution to the alert audience. Somehow art loses its virility and importance if it stays close to the bosom of the creator, hiding in the shadow of security. Today the creator cannot ignore or overlook the creations of his fellows. A song becomes more beautiful and meaningful if the composer uses many of the undulating possibilities and contrapuntal activities that are current in other arts. A song becomes richer and more resilient if tested by people—time. Slowly, slowly the dissonance becomes consonance for an accumulation of audiences in space, over the years.

As for the millions of students in the various arts in America, it is important to blend points-of-view and interweave the rarities and strangeness. It is important to notice the contrasts and similarity. Art is not a glass ball sitting on top of a pyramid. The student must be fired with imagination and learn valued techniques. To be aware, to be aware, that is living! Certainly the first step for creating. Art cannot exist in isolation. The creator expresses his common touch with the more sensitive. The fruit of art once tasted becomes a lust, never to be sated. And I maintain that the great cre-

ator is thoroughly familiar with the experiences and touchstones of all the arts.

The audience has its returns too. The returns are plentiful. People grind out an existence. They make a living and squeeze in a few moments of pleasure, like a two-week summer vacation. The pressures of arduous work are counteracted by eating, sleeping and enjoying. One side of life can be the understanding of the arts. There is within man a subconscious reaffirmation of religion. I feel that the arts awaken it. It is better to walk along the streets and see the tops of buildings, feel the mystery and life under the water, develop the individual to choose lovely homes and clothes. If we can agree that wars are uncivilized, if we can agree that wars gain people little, and if we can agree conversely that education can bring more tranquility and insight to a nation, then naturally enlightenment and enjoyment of the arts will bring happiness and completeness. In time this may satisfy mankind and mirror the folly of his violent aggressiveness. Perhaps this is wishful thinking. Still dreams make up a great part of our living. It is through dreams that people are inspired and from them that creations evolve. Thus a creator can change his dreams into actuality; and an audience can find spiritual help and strength in art and reap a deeper, clearer, helthier way of life.

7 Arts has become a necessity. The thoughtful articles and essays written by the creators in each field give one a chance to gather facts and fancy from *doers* in the arts, not *talkers*. Americans are extremely disturbed by the insecurities of living and by the fears

of possible wars. These awful tensions may be eased by finding some answers in creativity. It is reaching toward a balanced life which enables *7 Arts* to continue to grow, satisfying old admirers and attracting new believers in the eternity of the arts.

Fernando Puma

Paris, France

MAX BROD was born in 1884 in Prague. His books *Tycho Brahes' Way to God, The Master, Galilei in Captivity have* been translated into many languages. Now living in Israel, he writes and lectures. Mr. Brod's dramatization of Kafka's *Castle* has been performed in Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and Holland.

Notes on Kafka

For several decades I have been conducting two campaigns simultaneously in the name of my late friend Franz Kafka; the first for literary recognition of his work. In the beginning very little headway was made. After Kafka's untimely death thirty years ago (Kafka died on June 3, 1924, only forty-one years of age) it seemed almost impossible to find a publisher for the unfinished novels he left behind, a fact which sounds incredible today. Whenever I did find someone, he inevitably would give up no sooner than he started, so that almost every one of the volumes in first edition had to be released by a different publishing house. During his productive lifetime, Kafka had only a few short stories and novels published in unobstrusive looking little booklets. Today his entire literary output, printed while he was alive, is condensed in a single

volume. In reality, the complete works of Kafka will consist of ten to eleven volumes. The three great novels: *Amerika, The Trial* and *The Castle,* which established his success, were released through my efforts, after his death. This was against my friend's wishes. The motivating force that prompted my decision to disregard these wishes was because of my great admiration for his achievements. Furthermore, Kafka's frame of mind during the last years of his life was considerably brighter and more hopeful than ever before. The note left to me, asking me to destroy all of his literary remains, was written during one of his earlier periods, periods completely overshadowed by despair. However, I accepted full responsibility for all of Kafka's publications after his death. Thus a literary fate was shaped which had its peculiarities. There may be a time in the future when more light will be shed on this matter. At first I met with much hostility. But I determinedly pursued my chosen path. Today I find that my efforts have been rewarded to an even greater extent than I had dared anticipate. First his books were published in Germany. Then Kafka's books were translated and released in France, Italy, England and the United States. And with the exception of the iron curtain countries, including the city of his birth, Prague, where all of his books are banned, he is celebrated all over the free world as one of the greatest representatives of our century. That much about my first campaign—for Kafka's recognition in the literary world.

My second campaign was to gain true understanding and acknowledgment of the author's significance. This has been successful. Generally Kafka is looked upon as an artist who persistently painted life in the gloom-

iest, darkest shades imaginable—reflecting the anxiety of present-day mankind. Fear, loneliness and the inescapable imprisonment of the soul, these are said to be the only motives of his work. This conception I find entirely wrong.

Kafka lived before the age of dictatorship and the atomic bomb, before the apocalypse of enslaved individualism. But he anticipated impending terror and predicted it with ominous clairvoyancy. That explains the stifling, depressing and ghostly atmosphere that drifts through the pages of his novels. And this very sense of strange foreboding, the ghostly premonition of Kafka's prophesies, which have—to a great degree—come true, seem to be the most plausible explanation for the powerful impact made on a large reading public. This astonishing fact was again demonstrated during performances of my dramatization of Kafka's *Castle* which played in Berlin and many other cities in Europe. Events of time were "caught in the act" by Franz Kafka. The bad conscience was stirred. Kafka's warning to the world had fallen on deaf ears. Humanity had continued to walk along the wrong road, the road of indifference. Others believe it is the Nihilism which brought about the powerful effect. Is Kafka then an author of decadence, of inescapable despair, who sees no heaven and no moral justice? Has he nothing left to cling to except the sacrifice of the ego to damnation and death? Is Kafka then to be placed alongside Satre and Heidegger? It is this which I so strongly negate in my second campaign. Of course, I realize the motive of immense suffering, the motive of fear gains through Kafka's interpretation, a particularly penetrating poetic form. But I will not agree with

those who persistently look at Kafka as a man possessed *only* by grief and sorrow—a man whose every thought was dominated by his fixation of erring mankind. He has even been accused as a schizophrenic visionary striving to proclaim the world a place inhabited by demons. And finally, as someone said, he was a trailblazer for the devil and reactionary currents of our time. This is a statement, which in the light of his true characteristics of generosity, kindness and deep concern for the fate of humanity, seems especially grotesque.

In order to really grasp Kafka's writing in its entireness, one must recognize his masterful presentation of hopelessness and frightening emptiness of dangerous delusion. At the same time one must clearly see a ray of light breaking through, the indication of hope, a finger pointing towards salvation.

Kafka created a world of terror and anxiety. In this respect he is a kindred soul to the "poets maudits," the "damned" of decadence, like Edgar Allen Poe, Baudelaire, E. Th. A. Hoffmann. But it is characteristic of Kafka that he has no intentions of remaining in this world of terror. He tries with all his might to break away. The direction he was seeking could best be described with the following words: "Out of this dark, Godless void of our days, out of this state of paralyzed unconsciousness, towards freedom and order, the desire to adjust voluntarily is mocked and thwarted." The struggle itself will not be given up. Kafka moves in a world somewhat similar to Poe's. But he doesn't want any part of it. He feels utterly uncomfortable and strange there. And that is the main point. Kafka revolts against the world of decay and deterioration. He

wants to escape the world of horror and torture, the jury and malicious distortion of justice, the coldness, the loneliness. He wants to get away from all that surrounds him and torments him. He accuses the world of nightmares, and protests loudly against it. He protests against the conscienceless world. In the midst of a tumbling façade of scorn, Kafka never stopped to search for his isle of liberty, the continent of his dreams, where everyone could find peace of mind and happiness in his work. In his imaginative novel *Amerika,* he describes this search with touching sensitivity. Caught in chaotic confusion, he gropes for peace for the individual. He looks for God.

These are the things so often heedlessly overlooked. Let him speak for himself for a minute, and confess his faith and belief in God in his own words: "When you drift along blindly floating through tepid air, arms extending sideways like wings, observe your surroundings in but a fleeting state of semi-consciousness. You will, one day, miss 'the carriage' as it drives past you. But when you remain steadfast, let your glance be penetrating, then nothing can mislead you. There is no distance really, but only the strength of your well directed glance. Then you will look into the remote space from whence 'the carriage' will appear, rolling along, increasing in size as it draws closer. Suddenly it stops in front of you. It holds the promise of fulfillment. You will recline on its cushioned bench like a child, trusting it to carry you through storm and night.

Could anyone more eloquently express his sentiments? He says he is waiting for the merciful "travel carriage" to come along—trusting salvation to carry him through storm and night. It is everybody's duty

to become worthy of God's graciousness by making use of his senses, by avoiding the "fleeting state of semi-consciousness" and forcefully applying the "well directed glance."

I recognize the angel choir of Goethe's *Faust* in Kafka's work as they sing: "Those who make the aspired effort will be saved." With utmost clarity Kafka expresses his convictions. He says: "There is only the goal itself. What we refer to as the road is nothing but hesitation. The obstacle that separates us from the goal is the materialistic world. There is only a spiritual world . . . what we call the material world is the evil of the spiritual world. Before a strong glare of light the world can dissolve. Before weak eyes she will harden. Before still weaker eyes she will show her fists. It is up to us. It is our own fault if we let a deceitful material world lead us astray." Kafka urges all to overcome the material world. He reminds his fellowmen as well as himself of the things which matter most when he writes the following words in his diary: "I still get occasional satisfaction out of my work, but happiness only if I can lift the world towards pureness, truth and immutability."

Kafka's living image of the world in which he tries to improve everything and lift men towards the absolute pure appears often in his Paris diary. I went with Kafka to Paris, for two short visits (1910-1911). Both of us kept careful diaries. I published his complete diary in 1951 under the title *Tagebucher*. I had released fragments of it at an earlier date. Of course, there is a lot about Kafka in my own which I will publish at some future date. It is characteristic of Kafka that, of all the museums in Paris, he loved the

Musée Carnavalet best of all. This is the museum of the French Revolution. There time and again he would stop in front of one picture, which showed Voltaire getting out of bed, and, while still in the process of dressing, eagerly dictating a letter to his secretary. "What expression of energy in his glance, and in the movement of his hand!" I can still hear Kafka whisper this admiringly. And I see the old painting distinctly before me. I hope this interesting museum still stands on the same old spot, and that this special portrait of Voltaire is still there. When one looks at it one realizes that Kafka was far removed from hopelessness. On the contrary, he felt drawn to man like Voltaire, a fighter for justice and freedom. There is a great distance separating Voltaire's somewhat resigned pessimism and Kafka's humble, melancholic religiousness. However, there are points of similarity between these two philosophies of life. I learned this when Kafka encountered the portrait of Voltaire. He said, "Love the true nature of man." These are very positive words from the lips of an author who supposedly never took anything but a negative view of life.

One is apt to forget too easily, that Kafka, although the period of his productiveness was sadly brief, did not remain the same person. He underwent a mighty transformation. One looks upon him too frequently as a static being—not as a growing one. The three great novels could be considered as the symbolic stages along the way. The aphorisms and diaries run parallel and express very clearly what his novels, under the pressure of objective-creative formation, must leave unsaid. The first novel *Amerika* describes a young man, misled, who gets caught time and again in the

current of evil. The youth's genuineness and naivety saves him from filth. Karl Rossman, the young American pilgrim, is actually a picture of virtue. This pureness is one of the most lovable reflections of Kafka's mind and somewhat related to Dicken's characterizations.

After calling this bright creature to life, the pendulum of creation swings into the opposite direction—into the darkest night. Next to Kafka's portrayal of the energetic boy, endowed with unfailing judgment for what is *right,* stands Josef K., faltering and tortured by a multitude of doubts. In *Amerika* almost only the lighter side of Kafka's soul was revealed. *The Trial* almost exclusively reveals the opposite. Thus both books are a one-sided representation. One white, the other black. One must try not to lose sight of the thing that speaks for K's defense. It is the conscience. For in spite of his wantonness—in spite of the fleetness, "a fleeting state of semi-consciousness," the man from *The Trial* remains the man of conscience. He is sentenced. He realizes his mistakes and repents. Josef K. passes judgment on himself. The gloomy execution signifies suicide. Looking at it that way the hero of the novel *The Trial* loses much of his unpleasant inconsistency. This very unpleasantness is the cause of his pain and cause for his destruction.

Perhaps that is why Kafka wrote *The Castle.* He gave the leading character the same name, the autobiographical initial K., to suggest that here a higher level of maturity was reached by the same individual. *Amerika* presents the thesis (the pure—unspoiled being) and *The Trial* presents the antithesis (the depraved being, painstakingly struggling for his van-

ishing purity). *The Castle,* Kafka's last great work, presents the synthesis—the summary of his life, in which the contradictions annul each other. They united as a whole to rise to greater height. This rise is also felt in the underlying humor—which is only intimated in the other two novels. K. from *The Castle* is neither a pure simpleton like Karl Rossman nor a lost soul like Josef K. from *The Trial.* He is rather a combination of both, who has learned from experience. He takes his fate bravely in hand. He has a modest objective in mind and holds fast to it. He wants to start his own family, settle down, be part of a community and make a decent living. He wants to work honestly, conquer his inner conflicts; and he is shattered by the external resistance of a hard and inhuman world, rather than by his own insufficiency. Although Kafka was much too modest to be affirmative, there are definite tendencies in that direction. These tendencies would have developed into highly positive images in further creations if illness and death had not overcome him. K. in *The Castle* is by far the most masculine figure Kafka ever created. He faces his destiny and is crushed by it. Because of his courage he has our sympathy, which we are tempted to withhold from the lax, slack and undecided Josef K. from *The Trial. The Castle,* written close to the end of Kafka's poetic activity, is his strongest, most colorful and significant work.

In *The Trial* the hero is passive. In *The Castle* he is active and dynamic. In *The Trial* Josef K. withdraws from human community. And this figure of the "bachelor," as obvious by his first book *Betrachtungen,* looms like a frightening image. It is his negative incarnation, the family man, surrounded by many chil-

dren. (A trait which those who look upon Kafka as decadent never take into consideration at all.) The hero of the novel *The Castle* is sociable, he strives towards marriage. He wants to cultivate roots and wants his work to be accepted. He has found his way back to an active life. Even before the curtain rises, one can point out the difference between these two novels. In *The Trial* the hero is in continuous flight from the superior court, using all his strength and energy in search for the road leading to the castle. Watching his efforts, one is reminded of the legendary character, Parcifal, who, after many erroneous wanderings, looks for the way to the castle for rescue—to Montsalvatsch. Parcifal, who had already been in the castle, was turned out, and spends decades in the effort to find his way back. But like a magic spell the way was blocked to him. During a very beautiful performance of *Parcifal* several years ago, I suddenly saw the analogy between these two great creations. In both works a trivial failing of the hero, and offence against the unknown household regulation of the citadel, resulted in exile. Then the heroes made desperate, fruitless efforts to find their way back. Finally, mercy. Kafka wanted mercy for his K. Although mercy was only bestowed on him on his deathbed. The hero of *The Castle* is granted permission to reside in the castle at last, but for reasons of mercy, not for reasons of justice. Kafka never completed his novel. Still from conversations with him, I know how he wanted it to end.

The dramatization of a novel is always an elucidation of the novel. If this were not the case, one would find any performance on stage superfluous. The novel

remains the fragment. The play should and must be a firmly constructed entity. It must be complete within itself. I daresay that after one witnessed the drama, one can read the novel and recognize certain connections which did not seem coherent before. The drama might be a key to the novel. But this is not the only sense of a dramatization. Whether a dramatization is successful, can only be determined by an actual performance. I know Pol Quentin is preparing a production of my dramatization of Kafka's *Castle* in Paris. How would Kafka himself accept this posthumous triumph of his genius? The motto of his life was: remain in the background—remain unobtrusive. Unobtrusive in behavior, he never spoke in a loud voice Whenever he was in a crowd, he would become silent Only when in company of one or two would he lose his shyness. Then with surprising vigor, an abundance of ideas would burst out of him, which made you sense the enormous wealth of still unformed thoughts and characters that this quiet man carried within him. Never since have I experienced such nimble, spontaneous imagination.

At this point I should like to describe the physical appearance of my friend. He was tall, slim and slightly bent forward. His eyes were bold and sparkling gray. His complexion was tanned and his hair pitch black. A friendly, polite smile showed his beautiful teeth. His suits were dark gray or navy and always neatly chosen and in good taste. Thus he stands before me, in infinite kindness. He, who in his work accused himself of unkindness, thought of himself as too indifferent and not loving enough, was one of the most anxiously concerned friends and fellow creatures.

His life's companion, Dora Dymant, once told me how during a stroll through the city park of Steglitz they found a tearful little girl. She was crying because she had lost her doll. Kafka tried to console the youngster, but to no avail. Finally the poet said: "Your doll isn't lost at all . . . she only went on a trip. I saw her and spoke to her a little while ago. She promised me definitely to write to you." The little girl stopped crying. The next day Kafka actually brought the letter, in which the doll told me about her travel adventures. A real doll correspondence developed out of this and continued for weeks. It came to a halt only when the ailing writer had to change his residence. But even at the end, in midst of all the turmoil of illness, he did not forget to leave a new doll for the child. He claimed it to be the old, lost one, which had undergone certain physical changes due to her experiences in foreign countries. Doesn't this atmosphere of kindness and roguish inventiveness recall the atmosphere of Hebbels *Rheinischen Hausfreund,* a book which Kafka, next to Claudius' *Wandsbecker Boten,* loved most of all? Here (and not in the sinister mysteries of Edgar Allan Poe) he felt at home. This was the direction into which he developed—or strove to develop. Had he stayed alive, we would have probably witnessed unexpected changes in his imaginative faculties. Perhaps he would have stopped writing entirely, and all of his creative passions would have found fulfillment in a life dedicated to God. Much of what I heard from his lips, points in that direction. However, it is futile to ponder about these secrets.

The following story seems most characteristic of him. At the time of the release of a memorial book, a

former schoolmate of his was asked to relate certain memories of him from the past. The prominent man, who had shared the same school bench with him for eight years, was honest enough to reply: "All I can remember is this one thing. Throughout that entire time, there was nothing to be said about Kafka. No attention was ever drawn to him."

That, which seems nothing in the eyes of men, may, in the eyes of God be all important. Or to reverse it, what in the eyes of men assumes gigantic proportions (like Kafka's posthumous fame and the misunderstandings resulting from this world-renowned glory) may be nothing in the eyes of God.

If we approach Kafka's work with humility, we may approach truth and move closer to the realm of the pure—towards which he strove. This alone should be our hope. Whatever lies beyond that does not concern us, for it rests in the hands of a higher power.

GEORGES ROUAULT was born in Paris in 1871. His work is included in every important art collection in the world. Mr. Rouault is dedicated to the fulfillment of his personal style in oils, watercolor, black and white. He was Honorary Keeper of the *Musée Gustave Moreau,* a position which gave him a small stipend and enabled him to sustain himself until the world became aware of him.

The Painter's Rights in his Work

To make this report as matter-of-fact as possible I will only mention the risks and dangers to which, in my eighty-four years of life, I have seen painters' work exposed, and even their dignity as human beings. These risks have become clear to me in litigation which I myself have been forced to embark upon as well in that where the work or reputation of certain of my colleagues was at stake, on the death of a wife, or in the event of marital separation, or from some other cause.*

Some of these dangers came to my knowledge during the time I was curator of the Gustave Moreau

* Presented by Georges Rouault for UNESCO, International Conference of Artists, at Venice, 1952.

Museum, some during the 1914 war, when I had to put the late Ambroise Vollard's collection into safe storage at Saumur.

So here is the way in which, to my mind, the rights of the artist in his work can be stated.

I. *The Artist's Rights in his Work before Sale*

A work of art remains entirely a part of its creator until the day that it is detached from him by a voluntary act, freely agreed. At this moment it enters the commercial field, becomes a piece of property, and may become the subject of a contract for its sale or publication.

The artist's sovereign right to alter or destroy his work regardless of any expert's opinion lasts at least until the time when he surrenders it, thereby renouncing it and, by the same token, renouncing his option to keep it indefinitely, which derives from his complete control over it. From that moment the artist has only certain rights which I will refer to later, but I insist—and there is abundance of fact to justify me—that the creator of a work of art does retain "spiritual" rights over his works which have nothing to do with certain unscrupulous dealers.

Until the moment he hands over his work, thus exercising his moral right for the last time in a positive manner, the artist cannot admit that his rights are in any way shared or limited.

That is to say—a work of art, so long as it is not detached from the person of its creator—should constitute an *irremovable, inalienable asset,* like his sketches in his studio which are in truth his tools of trade. Sale under distraint results in works entering the market

against the artist's wish, before he would have consented to their being seen by the public, and possibly before they have reached completion—of which he is the sole judge.

Similarly in case of divorce or separation, no matter under what law the marriage was contracted, *the artist should not be forced to part with one fraction,* no matter how small, of his unpublished work for the benefit of his wife, or of her heirs if she is dead.

Even if it is normal for *the proceeds* of a work sold during marriage *to form part of the joint estate,* it is intolerable that, if this comes to be divided, a painter should be forced to include in it works which were in his studio, since these are usually unfinished, or not altogether successful or kept simply as sketches.

His right not to make his work public, which should be exercised with no reservations or limitations, *would thus be nullified.*

Even in the case of finished works, their inclusion in the joint estate and their allocation to the wife could result in canvases being put on the market without the painter's express consent.

To avoid all ambiguity on this vital and difficult question in the lives of artists, it would be enough to lay down that *the work itself, canvas or manuscript, never forms part of the joint estate, that it belongs to the artist alone* because it is in a special sense a part of him, and that only the proceeds of works sold or published during marriage are inheritable assets which can be added to the joint estate under the terms of Common Law.

The exclusion of such works from the joint estate

should not oblige the artist to make monetary compensation for them when a division of the estate is made.

It is virtually impossible to place an exact value on works which may be destroyed or remain unfinished, or even not find purchasers, assuming that the artist should decide to publish them or put them up for sale.

Few creative artists are in a financial position to buy back in advance, as it were, works that are destined to be destroyed or sold "for a song."

Therefore the only solution compatible with the artist's rights is to keep his creative work completely separate from the joint estate.

It is the only solution by which an artist who inherits from his deceased wife can avoid paying succession duty on his own works, the only solution that can avoid the absurd situation which can prevent a man and an artist like Pierre Bonnard from the charge of being a receiver of "stolen" goods in the form of work of his own that he was in the course of creating.

Of course, if the artist made a gift to his wife or his children of specified works, such gift would not be questioned; if need be, a simple signed statement by the donor would be sufficient proof.

II. *Droits de Suite*

I have said that in handing over his work the artist can retain certain rights in it. I must now state exactly what they are. Some, like the "droit de suite" have been established by various laws or conventions to which the artist endeavors to refer.

I will only express one hope in the matter: that this

right hand should come to be respected in all other countries, and particularly in the United States, just as it is in France.

The right of the artist to retouch a work which is no longer his property remains to be defined—a complicated matter, it seems to me. This complexity is mainly due to the fact that a picture can never be exactly and in every way compared with a musical or literary work.

When the creative artist alters these the original version can always continue to exist, whilst a picture may be changed in such a way that nothing is left of the original version but some inadequate sketches.

I can only ask the Conference to examine this delicate question and to find a solution acceptable to all—which seems extremely difficult, since some styles of painting are idiosyncratic and what may suit one artist cannot be the rule for another.

III. *Reproductions of the Artist's Work*

I will here confine myself to making a few suggestions about reproduction and exhibition rights.

The moral right to see that no alteration is made to an artist's work, to safeguard each in its entirety, is usually exercised by controlling reproduction.

Too often reproductions, particularly "color" reproductions, that are complete travesties, are printed in large quantities. And it is even true that the larger the printing the greater is the risk of it being mediocre, and the more difficult becomes the fight against this mediocrity.

Inadequately armed as he often is to defend himself

even in his own country, once across its borders the artist of today is generally powerless.

Nothing short of an international agreement, completely binding and carrying the certain threat of severe penalties against publishers who do not have reproductions passed for the press, will put an end to practices which cheat the public by presenting them with masterpieces that have been distorted purely for the benefit of dishonest business men.

I know that critics are justifiably reluctant to waive their right to quote. That is another possible subject for consideration by the Conference, which might set limits to the exercise of this right.

Using works of art for film purposes also raises very delicate problems. Although the painter is not a scenario-writer and cannot be asked to lay down the law on an art that he does not practise, yet everything in the production of a film, that might redound to the discredit of the works reproduced or might falsify their plastic value, ought to be submitted to him for examination and approval.

The artist should have a right of veto over films based upon or consisting in reproductions of his works when his consent has not been obtained or when his observations have not been heeded.

Provision could be made for arbitration in case of persistent disagreement between painter and producer, but in settling such disputes, it must be remembered that the matter is primarily a problem in plastics. Therefore the arbitrators must be specially chosen and the corresponding weight be given to their vote.

IV. *Exhibitions*

There is no law which authorizes an artist to oppose the exhibition of his works—he has therefore transferred their ownership.

Neither his permission nor—*a fortiori*—his co-operation is required for exhibitions, the object of which is sometimes ideological or purely commercial, or which claim to classify artists, or even group them according to more or less questionnable criteria.

It appears strange, then, that a painter may find himself thus styled under labels which he finds ridiculous or absurd, or associated with manifestations distasteful to his inmost feelings, or again the involuntary instrument of movements which dare to use his name even though he disapprove of them.

It is essential therefore to assure the painter of the legal possibility of giving or of refusing his agreement and making his protest heard in cases where, contrary to his intentions, use has been made of his person or of his name.

There remains to be considered the case of exhibitions without any ideological tendency or doctrinal pretensions, which offer the public, through some art gallery, collections which are insufficient, badly selected, or badly presented.

A painter must be able to oppose artistic manifestations made in his name in material conditions apt to distort the meaning and result of his work; or at least when the organizers of these manifestations consider that they may dispense with his opinion, they should be required to indicate clearly on all announcements

that the collection has been built up on the sole responsibility of the organizers.

Should the artist not be able to obtain every reasonable satisfaction he desires from private exhibitions, he should at all events have the absolute right to refuse to take part in "Salons" whose official nature cannot be contested and to which he has declined to contribute.

Lastly, instead of being obliged to go to law when another artist uses an identical surname and christian name, an already established artist should have the *right* to insist that a man who uses the same name be obliged to add the second christian name appearing on his birth certificate.

V. *Rights of Heirs and Executors*

With regard to works which have already passed to the public, the painter's heirs or the executors appointed for the purpose, exercise the moral rights in their defensive aspect of entitlement to ensure that a work's integrity is preserved, to oppose detrimental alterations to it, and to prosecute those responsible.

Heirs and executors hold a position of prime importance in the matter of the publication of hitherto unpublished works.

The artist's absolute right to publish or withhold must necessarily pass to his continuators to enable them to decide the fate of works about which he gave no explicit instructions before his death.

It is hard to conceive who, apart from the artist's natural heirs if he died intestate, or his appointees for the purpose if he left a will, could decide what should be preserved or destroyed or what should be published or withheld.

If the artist has not appointed by will persons he trusts to take the decision as to destruction or publication, the grave duty of making this delicate decision and seeking the necessary powers for the purpose will devolve upon his lawful heirs, in whom alone his legal personality survives and who inherit both his rights and his obligations.

Provision might be made for direct intervention by the State when warranted by the incapacity or notorious unworthiness of the heirs; in such cases the State would impose some degree of trusteeship.

In this whole connection it should be recalled that in the case of an author it is his heirs who are recognized by the law as entitled to take the decision as to posthumous publication.

In this matter, the object should be to comply with the wishes of the artist. His decision must be respected when he designates explicitly those who are to exercise a part of his absolute rights after him.

If he leaves no word, the task is one for his heirs of the body, on the traditional presumption which principle dictates should be made in their favour.

VI. *The Fate of Works of Art in Case of War*

I can never forget the anxiety caused me during the 1914 war by the formidable task of safeguarding the collections of the late Ambroise Vollard, containing, amongst others, very important works of Cézanne, Degas, Rénoir, Bonnard, Picasso—I have already mentioned this. It was with the thought of some of those august predecessors of mine, and especially for their sake, that I sought and succeeded in finding the house to receive the eighty packages; the matter was urgent,

so the Minister had said to Ambroise Vollard, who telegraphed to me to take immediate steps to find a place of safety.

During the last war I know that efforts were fortunately made, in France at least, to shield our national heritage from bombardments, not only State collections but those in the possession of private owners as well.

It would be desirable, without waiting for such crises to arise, for every country to make provision in time of peace for the harbouring in suitable conditions of the works to be saved from total destruction in war; it would amount to a "spiritual" Red Cross, such as might have been created before 1871, 1914, or 1939.

The works in question could be submitted to a Jury, who would decide in due time, according to the importance of the items, the action it would be appropriate to take.

Once it had been decided that the works could be put in a place of safety in the event of war, the person in possession of them would be given an official mobilization order which, should the occasion arise, would enable him to deposit the works in the appointed place.

I must add that there are other dangers than that of destruction. During the recent conflict we saw others resulting from the tyranny of occupation. I myself was a victim, though many others suffered far more loss than I did.

A civilization may be judged by the way in which it tolerates the destruction of masterpieces and accepts a return to the excesses of brute force without corrective and without taking any protective measures. Art

is a deliverance even in the midst of suffering, but to those who have no feeling for intellectual freedom, art is a crime! The artist a madman? Wiser he is in truth than king or emperor!

The painter with a genuine love of his art is a king in his own right—however diminutive his kingdom, however small his own stature. This is true royalty, and cannot be wrested from you, Chardin, Corot, Cézanne. You need never abdicate the throne that you won without violence, and you will leave a happier memory than many a crowned monarch, for people will understand your work and feel its message—for all time, perhaps.

For such artists it is not force, but love, that rules the world.

Were I able, I could say much on this subject, quoting many examples.

A learned man once declared that the world held no more mysteries! Which goes to show that one can be very learned and yet very foolish.

In those realms of the spirit where the artist roams, everything is imponderable; yet subject to a stricter law than that of weight and measure—for it is a law inspired from within, not imposed from without. The artist can be at one with the people and with the nobility. Aloof though he may stand, there are hidden links that bind him to mankind more closely than the men of action so alien to him.

In this mechanical century, surely art can sometimes be called a miracle?

JAMES T. FARRELL was born in 1904 in Chicago. His books include *Studs Lonigan,* the *"Danny O'Neill"* books, *The Face of Time.* He received a $2,500 Book-of-the-Month Club award in 1937 for *Studs Lonigan.* In the same year he received a Guggenheim Fellowship. Mr. Farrell's non-fiction books are *A Note on Literary Criticism, The League of Frightened Philistines,* and *Literature and Morality.*

On the Function of the Novel

I

I have titled this essay *On the Function of the Novel.* However, it is not my intention to present a special theory of the novel, and to try and jam it down the throats of my readers. Rather, I merely want to offer some observations about the novel, and about what the experience of reading novels can mean and can bring to us.

In the preface to one of the editions of Arnold Bennett's novel, *The Old Wives' Tale,* the author describes how in the autumn of 1903, he used to dine at a certain restaurant in Paris. Among others who attracted his attention, there were two waitresses. One was a pale and beautiful young girl, who waited on tables far from where he sat, and to whom he never spoke.

The other was a stout middle-aged woman, bossy and authoritative by disposition. Since she served him regularly, she began to take on a maternal attitude with him. If he remained away from the restaurant a couple of evenings, she would ask him why he had been unfaithful to her. Finally, she obtruded her personality upon him to such a degree that he decided not to return to the restaurant, and to become, as it were, perpetually unfaithful to her. One evening, before he had made this final decision, he noticed a fat, shapeless, ugly and grotesque old woman enter. Her voice and gestures were ridiculous. Observing her, Arnold Bennett quickly guessed that, as a consequence of a long period of years of living alone, the grotesque old woman had grown peculiar, without apparently having become conscious of her peculiarities. She carried many parcels which she kept dropping. And because of the way in which she chose a table and then changed to another, almost everyone in the restaurant laughed at her. Observing this scene, Arnold Bennett was pained by the coarse manner in which the pale and beautiful young waitress laughed. That was the one to whom he had never spoken. He reflected that this ridiculous old woman had once been young, slim, and perhaps, beautiful. Then she had probably been free of ridiculous mannerisms. To him, she was tragic, and he thought that she could become the subject or protagonist of a moving novel, which would recount and recreate the life history of such a woman. Also, in this preface, Arnold Bennett stated: "Every stout, aging woman is not grotesque—far from it! But there is an extreme pathos in the mere fact that every stout, aging woman was once a young girl with unique

charm of youth in her form and movements and her mind. The fact that the change from the young girl to the stout, aging woman is made up of an infinite number of infinitesimal changes, each unperceived by her, only intensifies the pathos."

Thus, in a Paris restaurant, Arnold Bennett conceived the idea of writing *The Old Wives' Tale.* It tells the life story of two women. It begins when they are first girls, and carries them to their graves, recording a series of "infinitesimal changes" which reveal how they change from youth to age. *The Old Wives' Tale* constitutes a story of what happened, or could happen in the lives of two sisters. This moving novel, and the story of its genesis or inspiration can give us a suggestive sense of what is involved in the so-called process of literary creation.

All of us, whether we be novelists or not, have experiences, similar in character or kind to that of Arnold Bennett in the Paris restaurant in 1903. In the course of any single day we have endless thoughts and experiences. We touch, in a fragmentary way, or impinge on an untold number of other lives. We are constantly observing, or sensing, thinking and dreaming or fantasizing. Our inner life continues from minute to minute, like a stream. And in the course of this, we more or less pose countless questions about ourselves and about other people. We wonder why we had such and such a thought at such and such a time. We wonder why we are sad at such and such a moment, or why we might suddenly be happy. We wonder what others are like. We may look casually at children returning from school, and wonder what they will be like when they grow up. Or our curiosity may

be touched by a feeble old man, or by others we see in a public place, or pass on a sidewalk. And all of this might be generalized with the statement that we wonder and are curious about the nature of experience. We wonder what happens and what is happening and what might happen to ourselves and to others.

It is out of this concern with the nature of experiences that novels are conceived and written. Often it is out of experiences much like those of many others that novelists will find a starting point or inspiration for a novel. There will be something they see, something that happens, some impression they have, something in their own experience which will impel them to evolve, think through, imagine, construct and work out a whole story. Arnold Bennett's preface to *The Old Wives' Tale* offers us one clear illustration of this. Many others could easily be offered. We say of novels that they are imaginative means of exploring some aspects of the nature of experience. This is not only true, necessarily, for the novelist, himself: it can also—and it often does —become the means whereby readers immerse themselves in human experiences.

Keeping the above paragraphs in mind, let us approach our subject from a somewhat different standpoint. Newspapers provide us with one type of record of the times in which we live. Here, and for the purposes of illustration, let us refer to Fascist Italy during the 1930's. The principal picture and record of Fascist Italy, which we in America received, came to us out of a day by day journalistically written news story. Our sense of this life in Fascist Italy was colored by our own views. It was further organized more or less in terms of the way in which the political, social and

economic problem of Italy, and of the world at large were phrased and posed. We inclined to think of life in Italy in a journalistic and, also, in an ideological manner. But posed in ideological language, in socio-politico-economic terminology, and in the language of journalists, does not always and necessarily coincide with the way in which the life and struggle behind these problems as felt by individual human beings. There is no literal one-one relationship or equation—to use a phrase from logic—between the way in which problems and conditions of life are posed and described in journalistic and/or in scholarly or ideological books, and the manner in which life is lived and felt, second by second, and minute by minute.* The day by day reporting on Italy, and the non-fiction books on Fascist Italy did not provide us—at least sufficiently—with what we might call human images. However, if our knowledge of a period, a country, the life of a people in a certain time, lacks human images, this knowledge is likely to be limited, to be insufficiently deep. If we would wish to understand more of a time or of a period, it is valuable for us to be able to link up what we know as facts, information, and opinion with a sense and awareness of what all this means and feels like in human terms.

Keeping these observations in mind, let us continue with our illustration of Fascist Italy. Let us imagine ourselves living back in the 1930's. Then, under Mussolini's rule, life flowed by, minute by minute, for

* I make this observation, here, with no intention of deriding journalists, scholars, or sincere ideological writers. Rather, I seek to clarify distinctions which might aid us in regarding and reading novels in a more clear state of mind.

millions of Italians. We read news accounts of Italy in *The New York Times.* But could we, with sufficient imagination and with a sense of identification, feel with and possess an adequate comprehension of the people whose living destinies constituted the ultimate content and meaning of these news stories? Questions about some of these Italians, and about what they felt could have come to us just as parallel ones, about the old woman, occurred to Arnold Bennett in that Paris restaurant in 1903. For instance, we might have read an article dealing with the land reform question in Italy. We might have asked ourselves the question—what did it mean to one or another Italian peasant? We might then have happened to take a walk, and to have seen an Italian, who was obviously born in Italy. Our thoughts and our attention could momentarily have switched to him. We could have speculated about what would have happened to him had he not immigrated to America. Then, the hypothetical news account on the land problem could well have related to and vitally affected his destiny as a human being. In a sense, these hypothetical questions can be compared with those Arnold Bennett recounted in his preface to *The Old Wives' Tale.* They are questions evolving, growing out of curiosity and wonder.

The novels, *Fontamara* and *Bread and Wine,* by Ignazio Silone both deal with people living under the conditions of Italian Fascism. *Fontamara* treats almost exclusively of the life of Abruzzi peasants. *Bread and Wine* describes aspects of peasant life, but also it reveals to us what Fascist officials were like. Its chief protagonist, Pietro Spina, is a revolutionary who has returned from exile seeking to gain a refreshed sense

of life, and to test and develop his own values. He had become fed up with the life of exile and is repelled by the arid slogans of mere political agitation. These two novels would have provided us with a partial answer to the curiosity we might have had in the 1930's concerning what it was like in Italy under Mussolini. The novels of Silone give us humanized images of life in Fascist Italy.

It has repeatedly been remarked that often we seem to know the characters of great novels, perhaps better and more fully than we know even some of our own best friends. The characters of a great novel acquire for us an extraordinary reality. We identify ourselves intimately with them, and we imaginatively share in their experiences. We hope as they hope, and we suffer as they suffer. Their tragic fates fill us with pity and sympathy, and their deaths imbue us with a sense of loss. And it is this process of identification and of imaginatively sharing in the experience rendered in literature which enables us to fill out and to intensify our knowledge of a time, a period or a society. The humanized images of people can help to bring us back to what is the source of all significant artistic and intellectual effort—the struggles, aspirations, joys and sorrows of human beings. If we are to live with quickened sympathies and with live interest in the world, we need, constantly, to be reminded that all of this with which we are dealing, relates, in the last analysis, to men and women, to human beings. We need to restore, to refresh, to deepen, and to keep clear our sense of this all important truism. And, novels, in dealing with what happens, in giving answers, in the sense in which I have already indicated, can do this for us.

II

Lord Bryce coined the phrase, "glittering generalities." It requires little thought or effort to write an editorial, let us say, in glittering generalities, which praises a certain way of life. Here, it does not matter whether we call this the American way of life, or the Soviet way of life, or any other way of life. With relative ease, any literate person of moderate ability can justify any way of life in generalized language, and with unproved assertions. Relying on words which have an extra-logical and symbolic meaning, and substituting stereotypes for impressions, many editorial writers and commentators do this. The comment on the "cold war" has, to a considerable extent, degenerated into just this. Ideas are being turned into stereotypes, and sentiments and emotions into sentimentalities. Fixed and highly editorialized conceptions of life are more and more being sold and established as true pictures, images and representations of life.

And with this point in mind, let me refer to life among the Cossacks, in the Soviet Union, during the period from the Russian Revolution on through to that of forced collectivization in 1930. Any Communist party hack in Russia could have written an editorial in *Pravda,* or in another Russian paper, speaking in glowing and generalized terms about the Bolshevik Revolution, the Five-Year-Plan and the glory of socialistist collectivization. We can, in fact, suppose that this was done, *ad nauseum.* Suppose we had read one of these editorials. We could have asked ourselves—as we had concerning Italy—what does this mean, what is this like in terms of the Cossacks themselves. And if

we read Mikhail Sholokhov's novels *Quiet Flows the Don, The Don Flows Into the Sea,* and *Seeds of Tomorrow,* we should have encountered novels which, at least partially, fed and satisfied some of our curiosity. For these novels tell us of the fates of different kinds of Cossacks during this bloody historic period. They suggest what the Revolution, the Civil War and the Collectivization meant in terms of the traditions, the way of life, the customs and the feelings of the Cossacks. The novels also depict the sufferings of the Cossacks, and describe many of the things they did as a consequence of the confusion that came with sharp and violent historic change. Engulfed in events which are far beyond their own powers to control Sholokhov's Cossacks, whether they accept or resist the trend of events, live through their joys, sadnesses and tragedies, and we—let me repeat—get a human and sequential picture of all this. Human beings are recreated on paper. They spring to life from printed words in such a way that we can identify with them. We can say and feel, people are like this. We can believe in the validity of these Cossacks, just as we can in that of Silone's peasants and Fascist officials, and of Arnold Bennett's two women.

I could give many other illustrations. In passing, we are all familiar with tabloid newspaper stories about crimes of passion and of love murders. Theodore Dreiser's great novel, *An American Tragedy,* is woven out of just such material. In fact, Dreiser used the court records and the newspaper account of a case occurring in 1908, the Chester Gillette-Grace Brown murder case. Similarly in fashion, in his novels, *The Titan, The Financier, The Stoic,* he based his story on

the life of a famous American capitalist of the period of the robber barons, Charles T. Yerkes. Comments, parallel to or similar with those which I have already made in reference to Bennett, Silone and Sholokhov could here be offered in connection with these novels of Dreiser. However, I believe that my point has been sufficiently established, and I shall forego these added comments.

III

Values are implied in the attitudes which we hold, in the choices and decisions which we make, and in our actions. They need to be seen as good and bad in terms of the way in which they can be lived by. When we read a statement relating to values, and couched in terms of glittering generalities, we can ask ourselves questions like these—What does it mean to live by these values?—How do people, or how might people live by these values? Novels constitute one kind of imaginatively constructed story of characters and events which depict how people live according to various values. In this sense, novels afford a means of testing the values in a society. If, for purposes of illustration here, we make a separation between theory or thought and emotions or imagination, we can say this —in theory, in, for instance, philosophical theorizing, and so on, we can work out what life means intellectually, and after having done that, we have clarified ourselves so that we may be in a better position to act. We can say that, correspondingly, with art, and here, since I am talking about novels most specifically, with novels, we can work through and live out imaginatively in the same way that we can, intellectually, in terms of

theoretical analysis. We can imaginatively live through various kinds of experiences by merely immersing ourselves in and giving ourselves to a novel. Reading it intelligently, we can live through experiences which, in turn, are a kind of test of our own moral standards, our judgments, our way of seeing characters and events. Out of this, we can become more clear concerning our own attitudes. We can test these attitudes and apply them as we read in order to ascertain whether or not they will hold water. We can come to some clearer awareness, not only of what we think and know, but also of what we feel. And here we can see one of the important, or at least, potentially important functions of the novel.

IV

At this point, I wish to comment briefly on one aspect of novel writing which is, I believe, relevant to my subject here. From the standpoint of the novelist himself, we can assert that one of the things that he achieves is, through writing, to attain a more integrated personality. After all, it is quite obvious that we can attain a more integrated personality by taking command of and handling our experiences. We attain an integrated personality, along with this, by becoming more conscious of the world, and of ourselves. I have already remarked of novels that they can be a means of testing values. This can apply to the novelist himself. In creating characters, he is giving expressions to various needs and unconscious drives within his own nature. He pours out his emotions, imaginatively. Identifying himself with his various characters, he goes through his own process of imaginative living.

He is, almost literally speaking, engaged in discovery, discovery of aspects of his own, as well as of other natures.

A parallel process goes on in the mind of the reader. If the reader gives himself to the experience of reading a novel, as it were, he recapitulates part of the process of the creation of the novel when he reads it in a serious manner. In consequence, it is possible, through reading, to become more self-aware, as well as to become more aware of other people. And this, likewise, can be the way to greater integration for the reader. Literature does not help us to become more aware in general, or in a general sense alone. The increased awareness gained through experience with literature, either as creator or reader, is or can be an increased awareness that relates to ourselves and to our own development.

My observations here should have a special significance now because of the character of life in our time. Again and again the complexity of modern life is the subject of comment. Complexity and crises are among the hallmarks of our era. Behind these, are forces, so-called, which are beyond our individual control. We all feel a need for greater participation in the life and in the culture of our time. But we are more or less atomized, more or less alienated. The division of labor, one of the primary factors in the development of our technological civilization, results in our giving use and expression to only a limited number of our impulses, faculties and our potentialities. Impersonal factors beyond our control and decisions play decisive roles in ordering our lives. For instance, consider the degree to which the very processes of modern technological

civilization are contributing to the organization of our lives on time schedules. We are creatures of time, of the clock, as Thorstein Veblen observed in *The Instinct of Workmanship*. Also, Veblen argued that we were not born to live in accordance with the time schedules which technological and industrial civilization impose upon us. Many of our relationships are, likewise, similarly controlled. An obvious illustration is to be found in business relationships. Business conversations are quite different from the conversations of friends. They are more or less centered in the terms of the business being discussed. People are not always polite because they want to be polite, but because the business dictates their politeness. They try to control what they say, what they do not say, in terms of the deal they are discussing. The relationships of people working in the same business are controlled by common purposes and by their common relationships. We have here a channeled participation in one aspect of the life of our time, that of business.

In many of our other relationships, there is the same channeling. This channeling of relationships in terms of necessary purposes, of time schedules, and so on, is one of the factors involved in the atomization and the alienation of people in our time. When we speak of alienation here, it has a dual significance. On the one hand, conditions of modern life alienate people from each other; on the other hand, we are alienated from ourselves, or from part of ourselves. Alienation from ourselves, or from part of ourselves is to be seen in the fact that many of our faculties, of our feelings, and of our thoughts are not given proper voice or expression. They are lost within ourselves. A phrase

of Karl Marx is suggestive in this context—"social space." The alienation and atomization of many in our time results, in part, from a lack of space. Modern man needs more "social space": he requires more outlets for the expression of his nature. He needs to participate more in the culture, the life of his times.

John Dewey described "shared experience," as the highest good of life. The phrase, "shared experience," should suggest something of significance and meaning of participation in the sense that I am using it here. The need for shared experiences in our time is, I hold, acute. This is bound up with our need to feel more and to know more. And—to repeat—art in general, including literature and the novel, can administer to this need. Novels such as the ones I have mentioned and endless others can enable us to gain a fuller sense of participation in the culture of our own time, and in the history of human thought and feeling.

All of us are locked up inside of ourselves. We are mortal, and possess the limitations of our biological nature. We know no one else in the sense that we know ourselves. We cannot directly penetrate the thought of any other person but ourselves. Thus, we tend naturally and inevitably to see others as we see ourselves, to turn others more or less into an image of ourselves. Our image of the world is delimited and in a crucial way controlled by our image of ourselves.* The enlargement of our attitude toward the world, the enlargement of our sympathy, the enlargement of our sense of others, involves a broadening, an expansion of this image or sense of ourselves. It involves and re-

* By "image of ourselves," I mean more than a visual or conceptual image: I mean our total sense of ourselves.

quires an increased ability to attain what the American philosopher, George Herbert Mead, called "the sense of the other." By gaining a better sense of the other, we can expand our image, our sense of ourselves. In this way, we will be in a better position not to be guilty of distortion, at least, of gross distortions. Similarly, we will be in a better position to see ourselves as others see us, and to attribute to others something of the same sympathy, emotions, feelings, generosity that we would assume for ourselves. We can thus expand our image of ourselves. For, when reading novels we often identify ourselves profoundly with the characters of whom we are reading. Imaginatively, we become almost one with them. This is a type of "shared experience" which gives us a powerful means of making our own personalities less rigid, of expanding what we can see within this skin of ours in which we are bound up. Here then is a significant aspect of the dynamics, as it were, of participation. But participation in the life and culture of the times is meaningless unless it is guided by a growing sense of ourselves and of others as human beings, a growing sense of a common or basic humanity which makes us all alike, as well as different from one another. The novel, then, is a means of "shared experience" in this sense, and it aids us in becoming more capable of shared experience in our real life.

V

If we would make a broad statement about what the function of art is, we could say—as Tolstoy did—that it is a means of the transmission of ideas. Somewhere in *What is Art?* Tolstoy remarked to the effect that

thanks to culture, it is possible to know all that has been thought in the past, and all that is being thought now. Strictly speaking, it is not possible to know all that is being thought, and felt, but it is possible to know some of this. Art, and the novel which is the major form of art in our time, permits this. And, to continue with Tolstoy's thoughts, he asserted—and I think correctly—that thanks to this, we are not beasts. We are social beings. What I have said in the foregoing suggests what the transmission of experience means in my own views. It is part of what I would call the logic of the transmission of experience which is part of the function of the novel.

However, in order to permit ourselves to gain some of these values from the novel or essay, it is necessary that we give ourselves to the experience of reading serious novels, that we go to them with our preconceptions more or less under control. If we read novels demanding that they confirm our prejudices, and that they give us merely stereotypes of pictures of life, then we are closing ourselves off from making novel reading a fully meaningful growth experience. We are not allowing novels to help us become more human to ourselves and to others. And this is the real and basic function of the novel—to help us become more human.

GOTTFRIED VON EINEM was born in Switzerland, in 1918. He now lives in Salzburg, Austria. He is a composer of orchestra and ballet music. *Danton's Tod* and *Der Prozess* are two operas which he wrote which attracted wide attention. The latter is based on Franz Kafka's *The Trial.* Since 1948 Von Einem has been one of the five-member board of directors of the Salzburg Festivals. These Festivals have gained international fame because of their high quality.

The Salzburg Festival

Long before the Salzburg Festival was started in its present form, performances of the works of Mozart were held in Salzburg. These were executed by internationally known artists, like Gustav Mahler, but never achieved more than local significance. After the first World War Hugo Von Hofmannsthal, Richard Strauss, Max Reinhardt, Franz Schalk and Alfred Roller combined to creat a Festival, the first since Bayreuth, which would stand outside and above the orthodox theatre. German and Austrian theatres, indeed most European theatres, had been "Court Theatres." After the vital political change brought about by the revolution in 1918 theatres had to fight for their existence.

Slowly they bloomed and became state, municipal or private Theatres. Out of this crisis grew the idea of a Festival.

The artists luckily found Franz Rehrl who became Chief Administrator of Salzburg. Able, energetic, sympathetic to creative ideas, he managed to put the Festival on a firm financial basis.

In 1920 Hofmannsthal's adaption of the old English play *Everyman,* which had been played before in Berlin by the famous Reinhardt Company, was staged for the first time as an open-air production on the Domplatz in Salzburg. The idea of presenting a play about the death of a wealthy man after the disaster of 1918 and the consequent insecurity of all values, both material and moral, before an architectural background of medieval power and self-assurance, proved itself extremely effective. In spite of some resistance from the press against this experiment the performance has remained practically unchanged as one of the main features of the Salzburg Festival up to the present day.

It had always been intended to produce plays and opera included in the program of the new Festival; but the opera required a greater apparatus— orchestra, chorus, stagehands, etc. It was only in 1922 that *Abduction of the Seraglio, Marriage of Figaro, Don Giovanni, Cosi Fan Tutti,* were presented at the Salzburg Municipal Theatre with Richard Strauss and Franz Schalk conducting. Reinhardt presented *The Great Salzburg World Theatre* by Calderon-Hofmannsthal in the *Collegien Kirche.* This revived the old tradition of presenting morality plays in churches. It was the intention of Hofmannsthal and Reinhardt to

use the inherent local possibilities for their theatrical productions. This brought a crop of completely new ideas for the staging of play and opera. Hofmannsthal says: "Salzburg is indeed the heart of this Austrian-Bavarian country. All those cultural and geographical lines connecting Vienna with Munich, Tyrol with Bohemia, Nuremberg with Styria and Corinthia, converge here. Here, also, one finds the Southern German Baroque landscape and architecture. The landscape becomes the counterpoint to architecture, and architecture has taken possession so passionately and theatrically, that parting these two elements would be unthinkable. The square in front of the Dome surrounded by palaces, columns, archways is Italian, almost timeless. It is overlooked by the mountains of a German landscape crowned by a German castle. Next to it rises St. Francis Church in the pure style of the Middle Ages. The statues in front of the Dome are early Baroque. It was Max Reinhardt's idea to build the stage for the *Everyman* play on this square in front of the Dome façade. But as the play came to life, it became obvious that in this place with its peculiar merging of nature and architecture, this theatrical dream has always been imminent."

Another stage was found by Reinhardt in the former Summer Riding School, part of the palace of the Salzburg Archbishops. The *Rocky Riding School* is partly hewn into the massive rock of the *Mönchsberg*. The wall of rock with its carved arcades served as background for a podium on which he staged *The Servant of Two Masters by* Goldoni. In 1933 he used the same place in which Clemens Holzmeister had built a whole medieval town, serving as a stage for Goethe's *Faust*.

This time the arcades became part of the play. Reinhardt thus exploited the tremendous space and height of the locality. *Faust* became a regular feature like *Everyman.*

In 1948 after World War II, Oscar Fritz Schuh and Caspar Neher adapted the *Felsenreitschule* for Opera. An orchestra pit was hewn into the rock and the scenery for *Orpheus and Euridice* (Gluck) was a semicircle of columns centered by a big arch. In his production Oscar Fritz Schuh used the three galleries of arcades for the chorus, and made Orpheus descend from the highest gallery till he reached the ground level of inferno.

The same semicircle, but with the space between the columns closed, was used for the world premiere of Carl Orff's *Antigone* (after Sophocles-Holderlin). And for the production of the *Magic Flute* the decoration was used with small adaptations. The next year Josef Gielen produced Mozart's *Idomeneo* here, Neher again designing costumes and decor. In 1953 Oskar Walterlin staged Goldoni's play *The Liar* and Gielen staged Shakespear's *Julius Caesar;* Herbert Graf and Holzmeister, in an entirely changed decoration, *Don Giovanni.*

In 1953 still another locality for playing opera was inaugurated. Schuh and Neher adapted the courtyard of the Episcopalian residence for *Cosi Fan Tutte* reserving the Carabineri Hall inside the residence in case of bad weather.

Works of Mozart have always been played in Salzburg and still are the heart-core of the Festival programs. And one could say that the Salzburg Festival has become similar to a museum, due to the personality

of Richard Strauss who was one of the initiators. From the very beginning, his works, most of which were also conceived in collaboration with Hofmannsthal, and which bear the strong imprint of South German theatrical temperament, have always had their place at the side of Mozart, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Weber and Gluck.

In 1947 my opera *Death of Danton* (after Buchner's play) was given its first performance in Salzburg; after which it became the rule to include one modern opera, preferably not staged before, in the Festival program. So in 1948 Frank Martin's *Le Vin Herbe* was played in the Municipal Theatre (Ferenc Fricsay conducted, Schuh stage directed and Neher did the decor). The same team had worked on my opera the year before and produced in 1949 Orff's *Antigone*. In 1950 Krips-Gielen-Neher performed Boris Blacher's *Romeo and Juliette* (after Shakespeare), and B. Britten's *Rape of Lucretia*. In 1951 Alban Berg's *Wozzek* (after Buchner's play) was produced by Karl Böhm, Schuh and Neher. During the year 1952 the posthumous world premiere of Strauss' *Love of Dance* (after Hofmannsthal-Gregor) was performed. Clemens Krauss conducted, Rudolf Hartmann produced and Emil Pregtorius designed the decor. In 1953 I had my second opera *The Trial* (after Kafka's novel) performed by Böhm, Schuh, Neher.

There were many voices bitterly opposing the inclusion of modern works into the Festival program. They called them inadequate experiments; yet the development of more than thirty years has proved those pessimists wrong. This is not surprising! History has shown that each period has looked at the works of the past through the mirror of contemporary production.

Now drama has been dropped from the program. It should be remembered that the Salzburg Festival started with theatre, for in the early times the strongest creations came from the drama side. But then Salzburg was fortunate to have the rare combination of two men like Hofmannsthal and Reinhardt, one was a poet, the other a brilliant producer. Both were gifted with the special sense for exceptional theatrical solutions which could not have been realized by routine theatre. After the German breakdown of 1945 it became obvious that there had not been any important dramatic production since 1933 within the German-speaking cultural area. (Carl Zuckmayer and Bertolt Brecht had both been known in the Twenties). No new dramatist of international significance had arisen. It is perhaps a consequence of this fact that the gifted younger generation of stage directors has specialized more or less in opera. These productions seem to offer more variety and interest. While drama in Germany hardly grew within the last twenty years, opera production increased. Talents like Boris Blacher, Werner Egk, Carl Orff and Rudolf Wagner-Régeny can be considered as leading in contemporary opera production. The fact that Stravinsky, who had always had a kind of aversion against this form of art, wrote a full-length opera at a time when prophets predicted the end of opera was in itself interesting. The Festival town of Salzburg aims at attracting an international public. Music overcomes language barriers. And Salzburg attempts to present a high musical level.

On Sunday mornings the world-famous Viennese Philharmonic Orchestra, headed by celebrated con-

ductors, presents its programs. Richard Strauss, Felix Weingartner, Arturo Toscanini, Franz Schalk, Karl Muck, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Fritz Busch have conducted in the past. Now only Bruno Walter remains. To this list have been added younger promising men: Charles Munch, Herbert Von Karajan, Ferenc Fricsay, Alceo Galiera, Raffael Kubelik, Igor Makevitch and Guido Cantelli. The personality of the conductor adds an additional stimulus; for instance, the programs of Bruno Walter show clearly his great love and devotion for the work of his master and friend, Gustav Mahler. The performances of the works of Mozart conducted by Richard Strauss remain unforgettable. Especially attractive were Toscanini's mixed programs with their bewitching interpretations of impressionist music alternating with superbly witty and fiery performances of the overtures of Rossini and Verdi, grouped round the revered homage brought for the German masters such as Brahms and Beethoven.

The German Classic and Romantic, however, were mainly in the domain of Wilhelm Furtwängler, who added to his exemplary performances of Beethoven's symphonies, the great, almost obsessed, demonic interpretations of works of Weber and Bruckner. Yet one must never forget that Furtwängler was a staunch supporter of modern music. Other original program makers are Hans Knappertsbusch, Karl Böhm and Clemens Krauss. These magnificent orchestra concerts were introduced to the Salzburg program in 1925 and have been an important part of the festival.

Besides these, however, were a series of musical performances more specifically Salzburgian, the like

of which would be hard to find anywhere else in the world, not only in regard to the artistic perfection achieved, but also owing to the particular staging.

Among these are Mozart serenades under the skilled hands of Bernhard Baumgartner who has contributed untiring efforts to develop the Salzburg Festival. Baumgartner is director of the Mozarteum, founded in 1927. These serenades are given in historical settings such as the Courtyard of the Palace of the Archbishop and in the Rocky Riding School. These romantic places are lit only by candles or torches, when works by Mozart and his contemporaries are given. The music is usually played by the Orchestra of the Mozarteum. Short, graceful marches played at the beginning and at the end, draw the listeners into the rhythm of the marching musicians and into the slow movements of the serenades. The serenades are perhaps the most authentic part of the Salzburg Festival and the highest testimony of the live presence of Mozart's music. The performances of the C Minor Mass are given in St. Peter's Church. This performance, initiated by Baumgartner, has become one of the highlights of the Festival. Mozart composed this Mass for Salzburg. It was presented for the first time in St. Peter's Church when Mozart visited his home town for the first time with his wife; Constanze sang, on this occasion, the moving, effective solo. The annual presentation of the Mass with leading singers pays homage to one of the very last musical creations which Mozart undertook in Salzburg.

Very typical of Mozart and the Salzburg Festival are the Mozart matinees introduced by Baumgartner in 1949. They are given in the Mozarteum by the

Mozarteum Orchestra, and by the *Camerata Academica* of the Mozarteum, founded in 1952. Their special function is to bring before the audience works of Mozart which the ordinary program usually neglects. They are exemplary performances with the very best singers.

Another type of concert, ranging from the classic to modern music, is given weekly by the very best ensembles in the Mozarteum. Especially popular among these are recitals by singers, with famous conductors at the piano as accompanists. Among the very first performances of this kind was that of Bruno Walter with Lotte Lehmann; the Festival of 1953 took up this worthy tradition with a concert given by Wilhelm Furtwängler and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, devoted entirely to the songs of Hugo Wolf.

Another early undertaking of the Salzburg Festival was the introduction of the Dome Concerts. Hugo von Hofmannsthal suggested in 1925 that the religious morality play *Everyman* given on Sunday afternoon, should find its spiritual continuation in performances of sacred music on Sunday evenings. Thus in 1926 concerts were held under the leadership of the conductor of the Cathedral of the Archbishop. Each summer four to eight of the great religious works for Orchestra and Chorus are heard, such as Haydn's *Creation,* Handel's *Messiah,* etc. They are performed by the Cathedral Choir and singers employed at the Festival and the Orchestra of the Mozarteum. In the beginning these concerts were played in the Cathedral; after the second World War, owing to bomb damage, they had to be transferred to the Aula of the University.

Another branch of activity which is gaining more and more significance is the musical undertakings with purely educational aims. The Mozarteum was elevated in 1953 to the rank of a University College. This takes on special importance for Austria's new musical generation of singers and orchestra players.

The foreign visitor may find the international summer academy particularly interesting. It, too, is held in the Mozarteum under the direction of Eberhard Preussner. Famous teachers from all parts of the world are invited to lead those master courses. Composition is taught by such well known teachers as Boris Blacher, Goffredo Petrassi, Carl Orff and Wolfgang Fortner. These master courses are mainly attended by students from the United States.

The Salzburg Festival is looking forward to its Thirty-fifth Year Jubilee. Naturally there are increasingly complicated organizational problems. The Viennese State Opera helps with some of these problems. As a rule the first conductor of the Viennese State Opera plays a great part as a conductor of the Festival. (Examples are Strauss, Schalk, Walter, Krauss, Böhn.) Vienna's State Opera sends to Salzburg not only their orchestra, the Viennese Philharmonic Orchestra, but also their choir, many of their singers and most of their technical personnel. The scenery to a large extent is produced in the great studios attached to the Viennese State Opera. To further Salzburg's own production of scenery, a special Chief of State Scenery was appointed a few years ago.

All this is the result of the careful planning executed by the responsible heads of the Festival. In the beginning as *Kunsträte* (artistic advisers) such eminent

men as Max Reinhardt, Hofmannsthal, Strauss, Schalk and Alfred Roller (scenery designer) were leading supporters.

Since the end of World War II, the direction of the Festival is in the hands of the *Directorate* which, in consultation with the artistic advisers, is responsible for all planning and execution.

The responsibility is shared by the *Kuratorium*, which is mainly concerned with finding the necessary funds. This *Kuratorium* consists of representatives of the state and Salzburg itself, and the *Directorate* consisting of a president and not more than four members. They submit the budget which has to be approved by the *Kuratorium*. This complicated machinery might appear somewhat overbearing, but one must consider the enormously complicated organization which goes into action at the Festival each year.

The visitor experiences the joy and peace of the Festival. The German poet Gerhart Hauptmann once said: "Festival in Salzburg, that is the most natural and most happy time there can be. The eternal well of pure poetry in the heart of this magnificent, wonderful city brings a pilgrimage of men of peace."

HOWARD CARROLL was born in Maryland. His work has appeared in *The Sewanee Review, The Menorah Journal* and in *Prairie Schooner* Mr. Carroll has taught religion and philosophy at Northwestern University.

Parabolas

France: 1939-44

Pockmarked with kisses, here our dreams
reverse this movement to the proof
of origins
and at a sacred circle where
our eyes and panthers tread
the python's blur.

1

Well bound in joy, idea stands
to dive into the babble of a crowd:
    Come, voice, to be the guardian of mind,
    now to embrace, display its worth
    at intersection of the sellers' cries.

There,
there is a figure of the circus
(grand and feminine, intense)
become a haberdashery of tones
for wedded ears of wooden men.

    Depth-digger,
    grave-digger,
    there
    we hide in overturned pagodas,
    we who are the vowels of virginity.

On the left we pace, sightseers;
on the right a sinister unknotted
monogram, which writhes, a zöophyte,
in shattered streams
of monuments and cockleshells, to cry
its exorcism:
    Morbid stallion, die!

2

And, in a night centripetal, a worm
inscribes upon its roll of country-saints
the satin souls of nations' pimps.

We go,
say GO
these pious or tumultuous illuminations
to an action of the belly's creed
and naked dissolution of this tense.

Always in the great morocco tomes
libidinous bookworms sire a void.

3

On swings the sun, no less
divinely genital, to crush
the precious inner doubts
and for all green and hungry
forms provide an end.
In native warmth all grows to death,
created sense.

Language, in its court-dress,
from a tumbril must harangue
the loitering fox!
Now, fabled syllogism, speak!
and in the distances of faith and memory
there sounds
a battering of laughing rams.

This is the section of an ecstacy.

4

But
We are finally to be, and quietly,
the sisters who,
for their propriety,
are present at the execution where

cold shots strike down the heads
and tulips in the eye.
    Pensive stallion, pray.

And now a lover in a dream,
caught on a low trajectory of suns,
tells us that a thorn has left the beam.

5

Here
by a river full of fish
brown women with their full
bare arms beat out those clouds that must,
for ages yet, restrain
the dirty breasts of heaven.

But only lovers in a dream
grasp, renounce with nerveless grace,
bathing in a lucent stream.

Here,
here this vale's proud flesh must break
and view go red with hate.

    Somewhere,
    ah,
    somewhere an heiress to the perfidy of words
    plays on a looted harp.

THEODORE ROSZAK was born in 1907. He was awarded the Frank G. Logan Medal at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1947 and 1951. Mr. Roszak has exhibited in the nation's major museums as well as abroad and is currently exhibiting with eleven other Americans in Paris, London, Brussels, Stockholm, Milan, and Zurich. His work is represented in many United States collections and others abroad—the Museum of Modern Art in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and the Tate Gallery in London.

Problems of Modern Sculpture

The problems and solutions of the contemporary sculptor are less often discussed than those of the painter. The following questions were answered by Theodore Roszak.

Ever since the reaction to the work of Rodin, there has been a great deal of talk among sculptors on the necessity of "truth to materials." The idea has resulted in very different kinds of work: for example, that of Flannagan, Brancusi or Henry Moore. What is your own feeling about this question?

"Truth to materials" is an old dictum which is re-

examined periodically. Of course, such a concern is an indispensable part of all honest workmanship involving materials and tools, from that of the simple craftsman to the architect, engineer and artist. For the sculptor, it becomes an important consideration in shaping an attitude towards his craft. His consciousness of it results in renewed exploration, discovery and exploitation of all the plastic suggestions inherent in materials and their processing, and thus leads to new insights of a purely formal character.*

But it is clear that truthfulness to materials does not alone explain the work of Brancusi, Flannagan and Moore, else they would be similar, whereas they are in fact widely different. For instance, in the schematic evolution of these three sculptors we have the equivalent in plastic terms of the life cycle: conception and germination (the egg form of Brancusi); foetal development and emergence, the breaking up of the simple organic cell and the mystic invocation of life (Flannagan); the interaction of more dynamic tensions expressing maturity and the growth of the separately related forms of the family group (Moore). While I use the work of these three artists collectively as illustration, it does not follow that this evolutionary parallel takes into account their individual success as artists; but it does suggest one kind of growth pattern represented by plastic ideas.

I would choose to investigate—in order better to understand their personal qualities and the distinct plastic order that each of them represents—the manner in which each was individually affected by the pre-

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vailing atmosphere of plastic resurgence, rather than the relevant but lesser consideration of "truth to materials."

There has also been among twentieth-century sculptors, at least until recently, a strong feeling that the true sculptor is a carver rather than a modeler—that is to say, a Michelangelo rather than a Rodin. Do you think that cut stone is closer to the essentials of sculpture than modeling and casting?

Modeling, to me, is a legitimate means of expressing sculptural ideas. Its specific technical advantage lies in its malleability; its weakness resides in its limited physical properties and its requirement of armature, "props" and translation into more durable material. Direct carving has the advantage of generating form directly in terms of its own physical properties, thus producing a consistent evolution of forms and surfaces. While some carvers heighten the sense of space by deep cuts and perforations, I have preferred to avoid what seems to me its stolid obedience to physical limitations. Despite my obvious bias, I have seen too many fine pieces of carved sculpture to let technical considerations interfere with my enjoyment of them. Nevertheless, I feel that sculpture today demands a medium embodying a combination of malleability and tensile strength exceeding the possibilities of both clay and stone.

Modern technology has made possible the use of metals with a great deal of flexibility. Today an obstinate material like steel, which formerly yielded only under great pressure, can be handled as easily as wax. It has the added advantage of permitting greater control coupled with tremendously increased tensile

and compressive strength. The interplay of surfaces brazed with alloys adds a further plastic variant. These technical possibilities permit the expression of new plastic ideas and experiences.

Drawing, painting and the building of constructions all have a direct bearing upon my liking for metal, and I suspect my affinity for welded and brazed steel lies partially in the ability of this medium to assimilate my total creative experience and yet lose none of its own organic unity. My own method of work is to make a drawing of an idea which, when translated three-dimensionally in steel wire, establishes an interrelation of lines, contours and tensions. These may multiply or diminish as work continues, but ultimately they determine the primary character of planes and masses. Spatial expression is thus *simultaneously evolved,* enlisting all the plastic elements available at the same instant.

It seems to me that one of the vital and essential qualities of sculpture is an attitude that embodies the most extensive persuasive accumulation of plastic experiences and sets up tensions that constantly assert themselves in terms of space and in turn become one with it.

In modern painting, there is probably a more conscious interaction between materials and ideas than ever before. That is to say, the modern painters are quite willing to allow themselves to be influenced by the work itself as it grows under their hands and to take suggestions (though, of course, not finished forms) from accidents of materials. Is this same attitude to be found among modern sculptors, and do you consider it a legitimate method of creating works of art?

The conscious interaction between materials and ideas has not escaped me and, in a different way and to a lesser degree than some painters, I am aware of the possibilities that arise from "accidents" that the work in hand may suggest. For me these accidents become legitimatized only when they find their proper relation to the whole. In a finally resolved work of art, "accidents" and effects that were accidental in origin lose their meaning, and it is probable that they have served only as reminders substantiated by previous experience. That is, accidents may awaken dormant responses that can be plastically useful and that might otherwise have been neglected, but I should not care to stake my creative life upon the exclusive use of such chance procedures. Their suggestions are helpful only within the essential framework of consciously directed effort.

It will doubtless be agreed that the contemporary artistic atmosphere is more favorable to painting than to sculpture. And it might be said that many sculptors, even among the best and the best known, have had their vision strongly influenced by the esthetics of painting. What is your reaction to this state of affairs?

It is not in our time alone that the artistic atmosphere has been more favorable to painting; this has been true for over three hundred years. Ever since the renaissance, painting has enjoyed a leadership of ideas and a numerical advantage and has been paramount in influencing and shaping the character and values of the visual world. From Verrocchio to Rodin, one can cite an almost endless number of cases in which painting left its mark upon sculpture. The social disunity following the renaissance produced an atmosphere

more favorable to painting than to the other arts, and it is to the discredit of painting as a cultural agent that it corrupted sculpture and practically destroyed architecture—until the present respite that sculpture and architecture are now "enjoying." In this connection, it is interesting to observe the inertia that seems to me recently to have come over painting. And while this is perhaps momentary, indicative of a transition to new forms and accomplishments, there are nevertheless many signs that a cancelling out of ideas is taking place, due to a generally felt lack of ability to sustain the initiative that painting enjoyed at the beginning of this century.

Allied with this situation is a generally felt lack of sculpture and sculptors. Would you say that this is due more to the esthetic bias just outlined or to a pure lack of physical and financial opportunity for the sculptor to do his work?

In a very immediate sense, the lack of sculptors and sculpture is related to the reason for that esthetic bias suggested in the preceding question, creating a set of social circumstances unfavorable to the sculptor. Although he is constantly plagued by questions of heavy materials, express charges and lack of space, a more fundamental reason for his plight lies in the circumstances peculiar to the present stage of civilization. The last vital span of sculpture occurred at the richest period of Christian theology, between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries, when the artist could work within an assured collective unity perhaps never to be regained. It is in a climate of such largely unified social forces that architecture and sculpture flourish, and any widespread practice and resurrection of

sculpture, comparable to the great periods of China, India and Greece, can result only from similar forms of social integration.

Allied with this in turn are continuing attempts to expand the area in which the sculptor may work. Do you feel it profitable, for example, to attempt to convince architects that they should include a place for sculpture in their designs?

It would undoubtedly be economically profitable for the sculptor if the architect would bear sculpture in mind when working out his designs, and there have been many instances of such collaboration. The results, however, have often been so unsatisfactory that I question its having been of genuine value either to the sculptor or to the architect, except in rare cases. Although this question refers to the welfare of the sculptor, the fundamental problem is architectural. I am afraid that any intelligent planning on the part of architect and engineer sufficiently broad in scope to allow for an organic acceptance of sculpture in architecture would be impossible under present conditions. The prospect of supplementing architecture with sculpture in a way that would permit the integration of their respective spacial orbits within a consistent community environment would be little short of miraculous.

In your work you have at various times done both abstractions and pieces with narrative subject matter. Does a change from one to the other imply an evolution of your style, or do you feel that both tendencies can be carried on with success together?

I do not believe that a visual expression is ever

totally beholden to an exact transcription of nature, nor is it ever completely removed from it. Art is always arrived at through some process of abstraction, and the divergence from nature which we perceive or feel is merely a question of degree and kind. I have yet to see any work, however "abstract," that has not already had its counterpart in nature or in the man-made world. The most rigid geometry in contemporary art pales when we take time to explore geometric formations in mineral and other crystalline structures. Microscopic observation reveals a world of geometric and amorphic structures that dispels at a glance the myth that abstract art bears no indebtedness to nature.

This process of abstraction applies as much to the evolution and sequence of historical styles as it does to the work of an individual artist. His work may parallel the progression of styles from the renaissance to the present day by beginning with the recording of the object and then tending towards an increasingly formal order; and at our stage within this development we find it proper and consistent to explore all possible mutations of the formal order. This process has been strengthened because the artist, forced by the social circumstance of an apparently growing isolation, prefers to recede into his own plastic world and recreate it. He finds additional support for his conviction because (as has by now become a commonplace) this "discipline" was for a time lost sight of and needs to be reaffirmed.

Direct visual sensation may occur at any level of "abstraction" and part of our seeing experience finds its most telling impact when this becomes a plastic

exchange. Our sensibilities are by now so conditioned that we respond in terms of sensation to any level of abstraction as we would to narrative subject matter. I therefore regard any single piece of my work—into whatever category it seems at first glance to fit—as part of the total fabric of my development, having been dictated by my special predilections.

Recently many sculptors have attempted to expand their activity both economically and esthetically by the use of new materials. Does this sort of thing seem propitious to you?

New materials suggest possibilities that upon occasion make for a genuine contribution, and their use deserves encouragement. I think it extremely difficult to judge the esthetic validity of experiments at this point, but these materials are a lively and provocative part of our present interest in extending our plastic vocabulary.

In my own work, I have investigated the varying means by which these materials could be processed. This required training in the use of both the hand and powered tools common to our industrial life; as well as an understanding of the manifold ways in which new materials could function, not only esthetically but also in terms of industry.

It may be relevant to recall that the constructivist position in modern art assumes a total interaction with life, theoretically and in direct engagement. This in turn suggests that the sculptor could assume the multiple role of artist-designer-technician and so forth, implying a creative life beneficial to society through industrial channels, one in which industry would

reciprocate by supplying incentive and opportunity.

My personal opinion, however, is that at the present time such economic and esthetic activity are incompatible. Industry today cannot absorb any genuine esthetic values; the values inherent in it cannot begin to supplement a creative life that demands, among other things, an unequivocal devotion and the highest moral integrity.

Would you say that it is better for the artist, if he must earn a living, to do it in an occupation in no way connected with his art or in one, like teaching or the applied arts, that is allied with it?

This is the perennial question of doing art with a crutch. Except in rare instances of economic independence, most artists must have supplementary work, and the kind chosen is largely a matter of personal adaptability. One point of view holds that the artist's creative ability may be harmed by work or ideas that, by invading his creative domain, vitiate his vision and energy. It is simple to support this view by instances where such an invasion has been disastrous; on the other hand, one can cite historic examples to dispel it. For instance, the renaissance artist dispersed his creative energy in many directions; and among contemporary artists, Klee and Kandinsky devoted many years to teaching and writing.

Of one thing I feel sure: no supplementary activity will have a final bearing upon a creative art. An artist accepts such work by accident or design; but he will soon know how well it is suited to him and will make the necessary adjustments. Having myself done many kinds of work, I have discovered that teaching in an

institution with an atmosphere of liberal ideas serves me best. In many ways, the American college is becoming the only place where it is possible to combine an interchange of ideas with some degree of economic security.

MERCE CUNNINGHAM, the dancer, was born in Centralia, Washington. He has performed throughout the United States and in France. Mr. Cunningham was commissioned in 1952, by Brandeis University, to choreograph the first ballet in America to *Musique Concrete*. He, with his dance company, recently presented a series of performances in New York City.

The Impermanent Art

There has been a shift of emphasis in the practise of the arts of painting, music and dancing during the last few years. There are no labels yet but there are ideas. These ideas seem primarily concerned with something being exactly what it is in its time and place, and not in its having actual or symbolic reference to other things. A thing is just that thing. It is good that each thing be accorded this recognition and this love. Of course, the world being what it is—or the way we are coming to understand it now—we know that each thing is also every other thing, either actually or potentially. So we don't, it seems to me, have to worry ourselves about providing relationships and continuities and orders and structures—they cannot be avoided. They are the nature of things. They are our-

selves and our materials and our environment. If a dancer dances—which is not the same as having theories about dancing or wishing to dance or trying to dance or remembering in his body someone else's dance—but if the dancer *dances,* everything is there. The meaning is there, if that's what you want. It's like this apartment where I live—I look around in the morning and ask myself, what does it all mean? It means: this is where I live. When I dance, it means: this is what I am doing. A thing is just that thing. In painting, now, we are beginning to see the painting, and not the painter nor the painted. We are beginning to see how a painted space is. In music, we are beginning to hear free of our well-tempered ears.

In dance, it is the simple fact of a jump being a jump, and the further fact of what shape the jump takes. This attention given the jump eliminates the necessity to feel that the meaning of dancing lies in everything but the dancing, and further eliminates cause-and-effect worry as to what movement should follow what movement, frees one's feelings about continuity, and makes it clear that each act of life can be its own history: past, present and future, and can be so regarded, which helps to break the chains that too often follow dancers' feet around.

There doesn't seem to me the need to expound any longer on the idea that dance is as much a part of life as anything else. Since it takes place in one form or another almost constantly, that is evidence enough. The play of bodies in space—and time. When I choreograph a piece by tossing pennies—by chance, that is—I am finding my resources in that play, which is not the product of *my* will, but which is an energy and a law

which I too obey. Some people seem to think that it is inhuman and mechanistic to toss pennies in creating a dance instead of chewing the nails or beating the head against a wall or thumbing through old notebooks for ideas. But the feeling I have when I compose in this way is that I am in touch with a natural resource far greater than my own personal inventiveness could ever be, much more universally human than the particular habits of my own practice, and organically rising out of common pools of motor impulses.

Since dance as a part of life seems self-evident enough,—a few words about what dance is not. "Not this, not that." Dance is not social relationships. Though it may influence them. Dance is not emoting, passion for her, anger against him. I think dance is more primal than that. In its essence, in the nakedness of its energy it is a source from which passion or anger may issue in a particular form, the source of energy out of which may be channeled the energy that goes into the various emotional behaviors. It is that blatant exhibiting of this energy, i.e., of energy geared to an intensity high enough to melt steel in some dancers, that gives the great excitement. This is not feeling about something, this is a whipping of the mind and body into an action that is so intense, that for the brief moment involved, the mind and body are one. The dancer knows how solidly he must be aware of this centering when he dances. And it is just this very fusion at a white heat that gives the look of objectivity and serenity that a fine dancer has.

Our ecstasy in dance comes from the possible gift of freedom, the exhilarating moment that this exposing of the bare energy can give us. What is meant is

not license, but freedom, that is, a complete awareness of the world and at the same time a detachment from it.

In thinking about contemporary dance, I am concerned here with the concert dance, I find that it is the connection with the immediacy of the action, the single instant, that gives the feeling of man's freedom. The body shooting into space is not an idea of man's freedom, but is the body shooting into space. And that very action is all other actions, and is man's freedom, and at the same instant his non-freedom. You see how it is no trouble at all to get profound about dance. It seems to be a natural double for metaphysical paradox.

In reference to the current idea that dance must be expressive of something and that it must be involved with the images deep within our conscious and unconscious, it is my impression that there is no need to push for them. If these primordial, pagan or otherwise archetypical images lie deep within us, they will appear, regardless of our likes and dislikes, once the way is open. It is simply a matter of allowing it to happen. The dancer's discipline, his daily rite, can be looked at in this way: to make it possible for the spirit to move through his limbs and to extend its manifestations into space, with all its freedom and necessity. I am no more philosophical than my legs, but from them I sense this fact: that they are infused with energy that can be released in movement (to appear to be motionless is its own kind of intoxicating movement)—that the shape the movement takes is beyond the fathoming of my mind's analysis but clear to my eyes and rich to my imagination. In other words, a man is a two-legged creature—more basically and

more intimately than he is anything else. And his legs speak more than they "know"—and so does all nature. So if you really dance—your body, that is, and not your mind's enforcement—the manifestations of the spirit through your torso and your limbs will inevitably take on the shape of life. We give ourselves away at every moment. We do not, therefore, have to *try* to do it. Our racial memory, our ids and egos, whatever it is, is there. If it is there, it is there; we do not need to pretend that we have to put it there. In one of my most recent solo works, called "Untitled Solo," I choreographed the piece with the use of "chance" methods. However, the dance as performed seems to have an unmistakable dramatic intensity in its bones, so to speak. It seems to me that it was simply a question of "allowing" this quality to happen rather than of "forcing" it. It is this "tranquility" of the actor or dancer which seems to me essential. A tranquility which allows him to detach himself and thereby *to present* freely and liberally. Making of himself such a kind of nature puppet that he is as if dancing on a string which is like an umbilical cord:—mother-nature and father-spirit moving his limbs, without thought.

My use of chance methods in finding continuity for dances is not a position which I wish to establish and die defending. It is a present mode of freeing my imagination from its own clichés and it is a marvelous adventure in attention. Our attention is, normally, highly selective and highly editorial. But try looking at events another way and the whole world of gesture, the whole physical world in fact, is as if jabbed by an electric current.

It has been a growing interest in "each thing-ness"

that has led me to the use of chance methods in finding dance continuity.* In my case, and for one particular work, this involved an elaborate use of charts from which came the particular movements, the rhythm (that is, the division and the duration of the time they were done in), and the space they appear in and how they divide it. There were separate charts for each of the three elements,—movement, time, and space. Then I tossed pennies to select a movement from the movement chart, and this was followed by tossing pennies to find the duration of that particular movement, and following that the space and direction of the movement were tossed for. This method might lead one to suspect the result as being possibly geometric and "abstract," unreal and non-human. On the contrary, it is no more geometric than the lines of a mountain are, seen from an airplane; it is no more abstract than any human being is, and as for reality, it is just that, it is not abstracted from something else, but is the thing itself, and moreover allows each dancer to be just as human as he is.

One of the things that has interested me for a long time, is how our balance works, not the fact that we can balance in many different ways and so find out how many ways, but just that we do balance at all, and how. On two legs or one. Dancing has two things in it: balance of the weight, and shift of that weight in space and time, that is, in greater or smaller areas, and over longer or shorter lengths of time. It depends upon the flexibility of the architecture of the body.

* The actual technique of "choreography by chance" is the subject of an article by Remy Charlip in the January, 1954, issue of *Dance Magazine.*

The variety of that flexibility is limited only by the imagination of the dancer and you can see where that has brought us already. I suppose there are actually relatively few movements that we do, and it's probably most pleasant for the dancer in his searching for movement if he lights upon one of these in a straightforward simple way. Lack of fullness in a particular movement, or exaggeration of a movement outside the particular limits of its own shape and rhythm produces mannerism, I should think. And, equally so, the fullest possible doing of a particular movement with the minimum necessity of visible energy and the clearest precision in each element of that movement might possibly produce style. But when this is allowed to go out the window for further effect, prolongation of pose for bravura or other such delights of the performer's ego, then the first thing lost is serenity, and in the rush to catch up, the dancer stumbles, expressively if not physically.

Buckminster Fuller, the architect, once spoke of his feeling that man had migrated around the globe via two means: with the wind, that is under sail and perhaps eastward generally; and against the wind, that is across the land. This image of movement and resistance somehow makes me think of how an idea of mobile and static could be witnessed in the ways a dancer can be trained. The prime motivation can either be made a static one, that is by letting the position of the torso come first within the possibilities of its flexibility, and then to that adding the activity of the legs, or the prime motivation can be put in the legs, making a mobile situation upon which the back and upper limbs rest. This all presumes that a relationship

runs up and down the spine into the arms and legs, to begin with, and that the base of the torso where the legs join the back both stops the action of the limbs and allows it to continue. And the wondrousness of being free and clear with both of these bodily components at the same time!

But the pleasure of dance does not lie in its analysis, though one might sometimes be led to think otherwise. Dancing is a lively human activity which by its very nature is part of all of us, spectators and performers alike. It's not the discussion, it's the doing and seeing—of whatever kind. As an adolescent I took lessons in various forms of American popular stage dancing including tap and a kind of exhibition ballroom. But my teacher insisted there was not such a thing as just "tap," there was "the waltz clog," "the southern soft shoe," "the buck and wing," and all were different, and she would proceed to show us how they were different. The rhythm in each case was the inflecting force that gave each particular dance its style and color. The tempo for a slower dance, for instance, allowed for a certain weight and swing and stopping of the arms that wasn't indicated in a faster dance. These lessons eventually led to performances in various halls as the entertainers for local events and finally a short and intoxicating "vaudeville tour." I remember one of these situations when we (there were four of us), stood huddled and cold in a sort of closet that was the lone dressing room, behind the tiny platform that was the stage this time, and our teacher was in the front of the hall making last minute preparations. Finally she hurried back, took one look at the four of us, and smiled and said, "All right, kids, we

haven't any make-up, so bite your lips and pinch your cheeks, and you're on." It was a kind of theatre energy and devotion she radiated. This was a devotion to dancing as an instantaneous and agreeable act of life. All my subsequent involvements with dancers who were concerned with dance as a conveyor of social message or to be used as a testing ground for psychological types have not succeeded in destroying that feeling Mrs. J. W. Barrett gave me that dance is most deeply concerned with each single instant as it comes along, and its life and vigor and attraction lie in just that singleness. It is as accurate and impermanent as breathing.

HENRY MILLER was born in New York City in 1891. He began writing at the mature age of thirty-three. Living in France from 1930 to 1939, he gained much of his reputation through the sale of his books in France. Mr. Miller's books include *Tropic of Cancer*, *Remember To Remember*, *The Cosmoligical Eye*. He has lived in California since 1942.

When I Reach for my Revolver

The late John Dudley, descendant of the Earl of Essex, once chalked up over my door: "When I hear the word 'Culture' I reach for my revolver." Today, when someone tries to tell me that Europe is finished, I have the same impulse—to reach for my revolver and plug him. Nobody was ever more thrilled than I to read that stupendous morphological, or phenomenological, tone-poem called *The Decline of the West*. In the days when Culture was only a bird in a gilded cage, the days—now so far off—when I was eating my heart out because I imagined I had already endured all the sorrows of Werther, no music was sweeter to my ears than this music of the end. But I have now outlived the end—Europe's end, America's end, all the ends, including the end of the Golden West. I am no longer living on clock-time nor daylight saving time nor

cyclical time nor even sidereal time. I see that the dead are still with us, ready and willing to be summoned from the grave any time; I see that the living are one with the dead and having the devil's own time shuffling all these corpses about. I see that India and China, supposedly dead for centuries, despite the teeming millions they have been constantly spawning, are now recognized as being alive, very much alive—I might add, frighteningly alive.

I came back last August, after a seven months stay abroad, feeling that if anything were dead and finished it might be the American view of things. Fresh from Europe, the American scene held about as much charm for me as a dead rattlesnake lying in the deep freeze. Why do we presume to think that we are the one and only people? What can possibly give us the idea that we are a vital, lusty, joyous, creative people? Compared with the European, the American strikes me as having the vivacity of a pall-bearer. He comes alive only when he is quoting facts, and for me his facts lack truth, wisdom and passion. His facts, which are sterile, and his labor-saving machines, which break his back—they seem to go together.

Every time I am challenged about Europe, whether I am in a mood to attack or a mood to defend, Wassermann's words always sing out in my head. Waremme, that astounding character which haunts the pages of *The Maurizius Case,* had been saying that only after renouncing Europe could a person of his sort begin to understand what Europe really meant. Then comes this passage: "Europe was not merely the sum total of the ties of his own individual existence, friendship and love, hatred and unhappiness, success and disappoint-

ment; it was, venerable and intangible, the existence of a unity of two thousand years, Pericles and Nostradamus, Theodoric and Voltaire, Ovid and Erasmus, Archimedes and Gauss, Calderon and Dürer, Phidias and Mozart, Petrarch and Napoleon, Galileo and Nietzsche, an immeasurable army of geniuses and an equally immeasurable army of demons. All this light driven into darkness and shining forth from it again, a sordid morass producing a golden vessel, the catastrophe and inspirations, the revolutions and periods of darkness, the moralities and the fashions, all that great common stream with its chains, its stages, and its pinnacles, making up one spirit. That was Europe, that was his Europe."

And we are supposed to believe that all is now over, because after two devastating world wars Europe, to our mind, seems listless, disinterested, cynical, skeptical, because she objects to being bullied, cajoled, threatened, bribed by our far-seeing statesmen, industrialists, bankers and war-mongers? Every month some well-known American author is being translated into one of the numerous European tongues. Can any one say that, taken as a whole, the works of our contemporary authors breathe optimism, wisdom, courage or insight? Examine the works of those American authors who won the Nobel Prize: do they reflect the spirit of a young, ardent, up-and-coming race?

In Europe, with none of that security and physical ease which Americans deem indispensable, I found men and women pursuing their vocations just as passionately as when I lived there in the thirties. The creative spirits were even more creative than before, the old men younger than ever, and the young men older

than ever. I no longer fear for the younger generation, supposedly sad and disillusioned. Nor do I fear for the old ones, because their time will soon be up. Conditions being what they are, the young have every right to be pessimistic, rebellious, and thoroughly disinterested in the empty promises of their governing bodies. As for the old ones, all of them living out a glorious second youth, immune to world conditions, concerned only with the grand problems, creating with ever more freedom, daring and mastery, what have we to fear for them unless it be our failure to make use of the inspiration which their example affords us? A man is not doomed in Europe because he starts out on the wrong foot; a man is not finished in Europe when he arrives at a certain age. Go through the roster of the great names in European art; see what towering monoliths it contains. And how many of these illustrious ones only began their great works in so-called old age!

From the standpoint of quality and production alike, what monumental figures has France alone given the world in the field of literature! And continues to give the world. And what have American publishers given, in translation, of the works of contemporary French giants? How are we to know anything of the spirit which informs Europe when we know hardly anything of the works which their foremost creators are turning out? If we are mere playthings, as we undoubtedly are, in the hands of European diplomats, we are but babes in arms when it comes to grappling with European literature. The respected European writer begins on a level which our best writers seldom or never attain. Limiting one's glance to book reviews alone, the dif-

ference in tone, in reach, in judgment and in understanding, between our critics and theirs is incredible. True, occasionally one of our celebrated writers knocks out a sensational work, a shot in the dark, you might say. He himself does not know how it was done. There was no evolution preceding it and no sequel to follow. It hangs in the void, like a landscape without foreground or background. It just happened, *et c'est tout.*

What is most comforting and sustaining about the European scene is the feeling of continuity which permeates even the stones of the buildings. An artist, to survive, demands this atmosphere of continuity. Contrary to what the unthinking believe, it is tradition which nurtures change, tradition which nurtures revolution, tradition which nurtures freedom of expression. Sound the roll-call of the heretics, the free-thinkers, the rebels, the pathfinders, the inconoclasts, and you will find that they are in the tradition. In her two thousand years of struggle, change and experimentation Europe has experienced well-nigh everything. Along with the flowers of culture she has accepted, perhaps deliberately nourished, the weeds. There is still room in Europe for all manner of growths. Even the obnoxious ones, I must confess, seem less obnoxious, less dangerous, than the American variety. The European does not expect every one to be alike and think alike. He thrives on variety and contrarity. We, on the other hand, grow panicky and hysterical when we discover that all the world does not agree with us. We behave, to the great dismay and disgust of the European, as if we were the Chosen People.

All this struggle, turmoil and confusion naturally creates a rich leaven for the European man of letters.

He is not easily frightened of ideas nor paralyzed by misfortune or defeat, nor silenced by bad government or mis-government. Throughout the ages he has played a part in every kind of communal experiment. Some of the greatest figures have been, from the present standpoint, on the wrong side of the fence, have espoused the wrong cause. They remain great nonetheless. Their works are studied and talked about. What a contrast, this age-old Europe, to even that young America which Charles Dickens described over a hundred years ago! "I tremble," he writes, "for a Radical coming here, unless he is a Radical on principle, by reason and reflection, and from the sense of right. I fear that if he were anything else he would return home a Tory . . . I say no more on that head for two months from this time, save that I do fear that the heaviest blow ever dealt at liberty will be dealt by this country, in the failure of its example on the earth."

It was my good fortune, on returning to Europe this year, to find some of my old friends still alive. Every one of them had been through hell during the Occupation. Almost every one of them had been starved, beaten, tortured, either by the enemy or by his own people. I found them all, without exception, in good spirits, working more assiduously and joyously than ever before. To be truthful, they were all younger in spirit than when I knew them before. They were not turning out black, pessimistic, nihilistic works, as one might imagine. Quite the contrary. I found none of that intolerance, bitterness, cynicism or paralysis which some of my American friends warned me to be prepared for. It is true that, in order to continue their chosen work, many of my old friends now found them-

selves obliged to do all manner of drudge work as well. One of them, a poet and playwright, confessed to me that since the end of the war he had translated some fifty full length books. (It is unnecessary, I hope, for me to stress how miserably a translator is paid for his work—at home and abroad.) But perhaps because they had suffered so bitterly during the war, this additional burden, this drudgery, no longer seemed the bugaboo that it is to an American. They were all thankful to be alive, grateful, despite their situation, to be able to express their aliveness. Suffering and privation had cured them of imaginary ills and of some very real ills as well.

Certainly I do not wish to imply that war is a good thing, neither for the artist nor for the general run, not even for those who make it a profession. But it is undeniable that those of my friends who survived the war were strengthened by the experience. One of the strongest contrasts I can think of between my artist friends here and those abroad lies in this matter of spirit and energy. The American writer, from what I know of him through personal relations, is easily discouraged. I am baffled sometimes to know why he ever chose the pursuit of letters. He is certainly not in his calling with both feet. He is not "dedicated," perhaps that is the kindest way to put it. He is ready to renounce his calling as soon as the pressure becomes too hot. Part of the hopelessness and listlessness of the American writer is explainable by the attitude of the public, for the American public seems not only to be indifferent to the spiritual pabulum it receives but actually prefers, if there is the slightest choice, physical or material nourishment. And even here, in this matter

of physical and material comfort, the American is utterly deceived, utterly deluded. I have only to think of a day spent with any poor European artist—and how many I have known!—to realize that the American is incapable even of enjoying the little which is permitted him. . . . I mean, his physical wealth. His car may take him wherever he wishes to go, but what is he met with on arriving at his destination? If it is a restaurant, the food is usually unpalatable; if it is a theatre, the spectacle bores him; if it is a resort, there is nothing to do but drink. If he remains at home with his friends the conversation soon degenerates into a ridiculous argument, such as schoolboys enjoy, or peters out. The art of living alone, or with one's neighbor, is unknown. The American is an unsocial being who seems to find enjoyment only in the bottle or with his machines. He worships success, but on attaining it he is more miserable than ever. At the height of his powers he finds himself morally and spiritually bankrupt; a cough is enough to finish him off.

During the course of my seven months abroad I visited quite a number of writers, painters, sculptors; some were old friends, many were new ones, friends I didn't know I had until we met. Now and then I ran into an avowed enemy who usually ended up by becoming a friend. Most of these visits and encounters took place in small towns, villages and hamlets, such as Woluwe-St. Lambert, Bruges, La Ciotât, Carcassonne, Montpellier, Périguex, Les Eyzies, Morgeat, Lausanne, Vence, Seville, Wells (England). Corwen, Wales, will remain especially engraved in my memory. I had gone there expressly to pay a flying visit to John Cowper Powys, a man now in his eighties. Here was

an Englishman (of Welsh blood) who had spent over thirty years of his life in America, "popularizing culture," as people fondly say. I had attended his lectures in New York, when I was in my early twenties; I had read a number of his books, and after a lapse of almost twenty-five years I had started up a correspondence with him. I deliberately make this digression to pay tribute once again to a great spirit. Here is a man who gave the best years of his life to America, who exerted a considerable influence over many of our contemporary writers and artists, and who some fifteen years or so ago returned to his native heath, to a tiny, remote village which none of the great world figures ever penetrate. Here, year after year, he has been turning out one profound, beautiful book after another, most of them, I blush to say, unknown to our compatriots. In this ripe spirit I found a man of letters who is indeed an honor to his calling, one of the few writers alive, I might add, who can be looked upon as an example to other writers. I can truly say of him that he is the youngest, the most alive spirit I have ever encountered. He has evolved a philosophy of his own —a philosophy of solitude or a philosophy of "in spite of," as he calls it—which he practises and which keeps him literally "as fresh as a daisy." He radiates joy and well-being. He acknowledges as his sources of inspiration—Homer, Dante, Rabelais, Goethe, Shakespeare, Dostoievsky, Walt Whitman. He introduces their names frequently in his conversations and never tires of quoting their words. He is not only the most tolerant and gracious individual I ever met but, like Whitman himself—for whom he has the highest reverence—a man who has flowered from the roots. Though he

exudes culture and learning, he is at home with children, nobodies and idiots. His daily routine is so simple as to be almost primitive. It begins with a long morning prayer for the protection of the creature world against the sadistic men of science who torture and vivisect them. Without wants he has become free as a bird, and what is more important, he is acutely aware of his hard-won freedom and rejoices in it. To meet him is an inspiration and a blessing. And this man, who has so much to give the world, who has already given abundantly, indeed, is hardly known, hardly ever mentioned, when the subject of letters comes up. It ought to be written over his door, as coming from the Lord Jehovah himself: "I am the one who fished you out of the mud. Now you come here and listen to me!"

If I had met only John Cowper Powys my trip would have been amply justified. But I had the great good fortune to meet other unique individuals, all of them contributing to my enrichment, enjoyment and understanding of life. Nowhere in Europe, even in the enemy's camp, was I greeted with the silly, stupid, pointless, and usually insulting queries which I am accustomed to receiving from my American friends and admirers. Even the Juge d'Instruction, before whom I was obliged to appear before leaving Paris, was more civil, tolerant and understanding of my work than our pompous, fatuous American literary critics. It was actually a pleasure to be questioned by such a man, even though the subject was a painful one. And what shall I say of Francis Raoul, Chef du Cabinet at the Préfecture de Police in Paris, whom I had to seek out in connection with an extension of my visa?

Show me his like in America! Show me the like, among police authorities, of Fernand Rude at the Sous-Préfecture in Vienne, where I spent hours looking over his library, particularly his rare collection of books dealing with Utopia, on which subject he is an authority. It was at this man's home that I met for the second time Dr. Paul-Louis Couchoud, who had once been the private physician, secretary and friend of Anatole France. Some may know him better as the author of *Le Dieu Jésus, Le Mystere de Jésus, Sages et Poetes d'Asie* and other works. I shall always remember him as the serene, gentle spirit who graced the table with his presence at the banquet offered a few intimate friends by M. et Mme. Point of the Restaurant de la Pyramide in Vienne. Such a feast—for body and soul—as the Points gave that day could never have happened (for me) in any other setting. It was something that heretofore I believed only the Romans or the Greeks capable of creating.

But how many wonderful souls I met throughout my journey! What marvelous days in the suburbs of Brussels, chez Pierre Lesdain; what explorations and feasts with his brother, Maurice Lambilliotte, the editor of *Syntheses;* what illuminating talks in Périgueux, Les Eyzies and Lascaux with Dr. de Fontbrune, the most brilliant of all the interpreters of Nostradamus; what serene, joyous conversations with Joseph Delteil of Montpellier, who gave us *Choléra, Sur La Fleuve Amour, Jeanne d'Arc, La Fayette,* and the book I particularly treasure—*De Jean-Jacques Rousseau à Mistral.* How easy and natural it was to move with him from the beauty and glory of the antique world to such subjects as Jesus, Socrates and

St. Francis of Assisi. And how natural again to converse, as with a long lost brother, with that amazing star of the cinema world, Michel Simon! Or shall I speak of that Saturday afternoon at the home of Blaise Cendrars, one of those giants of European literature whose name is hardly known to Americans? Who among us could "receive" in the manner of the inimitable Blaise? What a motley swarm of individuals passed in and out of his rooms that day! And with what warmth, vivacity, lucidity, urbanity and genuine love of one's fellowman he greeted them all!

As I write, there lies before my eyes the November issue of the monthly bulletin put out by the Guilde du Livre in Lausanne. What a treat for the eyes to see this little bulletin each month! Is there a Book Club in America, or a publishing house large or small, which issues anything comparable? If so, I have never heard of it. The texts, the photos, the drawings, the reproductions, the covers, the lists of books—all is intimate, seductive, engaging in this bulletin. I made it a point, when in Lausanne, to call on Albert Mermoud, director of the club. I wish the directors of American book clubs would do the same—we might have a much needed change of diet.

I mentioned a moment ago the role of the public vis-à-vis the writer. Certainly the European reader is a different species than the American. He not only reads more books than the American, he *buys* more. Everywhere I went books occupied a prominent place in the home. And the owner knew his books, I might add. I also had the impression that authors, living authors, play a more important role in a man's life there. When an injustice is dealt a writer by a court, a government,

a publisher, or by another writer, the public may be counted on to rush to the victim's defense. There are literary disputes, in European countries, which literally rock the nation. With us only questions involving the morals of an author seem capable of arousing public attention, and it is then a sensational curiosity which is inflamed and not a genuine, passionate interest. American publishers and editors have done their utmost to destroy taste, passion and discrimination in the reading public. The situation has deteriorated to such a point that reputable publishing houses will often urge a new writer to permit one of their staff to rewrite his book, pretending that such a procedure is in his own interests. A writer who is at all different from the common run is virtually doomed. Each house has its own idea of what is suitable or saleable. To meet their varying demands—the most absurd, the most degrading demands—a young writer can beat his brains out and get nowhere. The European publisher has his fixed ideas too, I am aware; he too is also a businessman first and foremost, and a very hard-headed one to boot. *But,* he has a public to reckon with. He is a part of that public, in a very real sense. Besides, he is usually not just a business man, any more than his authors are just writers. (It is only in our country, it seems to me, that a person can be "just a business man" and not only be respected but emulated.) Though he is no angel in disguise, the European publisher has what might be called professional pride. I honestly believe the majority of them would not be content to be merely "successful."

From all this an American writer may well be inclined to ask if he would have a better chance abroad

than here. My answer invariably is—Yes! Yes, even if he prove a failure. Because even as a failure he will have enjoyed contact with other writers, other kindred spirits, in an atmosphere here unknown—an atmosphere, let me hasten to add, undoubtedly more grim, more terrifying, more fecund, and ever so much more real. He will run every risk of starving to death, just as here, but he will not necessarily feel like a fish out of water, like a creature at the zoo, or like an escaped inmate of a lunatic asylum. He will not die a freak or a monstrosity, unless he possesses an unusual amount of genius. Naturally, the more genius he has the harder his lot will be. The world was not made for the genius, we know full well. It may comfort him to know, however, that if he has just the right amount of genius he will eventually be given bread instead of stones. Only in a few little countries, in this civilized world, is there any semblance of protection or encouragement given the man of talent. Russia, like America, to be sure, takes good care of those who toe the line.

When all is said and done, the greatest writers—and the most prolific ones!—are still the French. Many French writers, of course, just like many French painters, scupltors and musicians, are not French at all. It is to the honor of France that she has incorporated into her bloodstream so many diverse foreign elements. It is a curious thing, on the other hand, that some of the most celebrated French writers give the illusion of being un-French. I mean by that—*different*, vastly different from their compeers. Here in America, to be "different" is almost tantamount to being a traitor. Though our publishers will tell you that they

are ever seeking "original" writers, nothing could be farther from the truth. What they want is more of the same, only thinly disguised. They most certainly do not want another Faulkner, another Melville, another Thoreau, another Whitman. What the *public* wants, no one knows. Not even the publishers.

In a profound sense every great artist is hastening the end. A great artist is not simply a revolutionary, in style, form or content, but a rebel against the society he is born into. What he clamors for, avowedly or unavowedly, is a new deal—in other words, *freedom.* His idea of freedom is life lived imaginatively. This is the real tradition sustaining art, this belief, this conviction, that the way of art is the way out of the wilderness. That it is, in short, *the* way of life. In no period of man's history has this type of individual ever had an easy time of it. For him the enemy is not without the gates but within. He is always the alien, the pariah, the disturber of the peace, the iconoclast and the traitor. And always "the corrupter of youth." Whenever the public loses faith in the artist, it is the artist's fault. It is his fault because it means that he has lost sight of his high role. Lost faith in himself, in other words. Who but the artist has the power to open man up, to set free the imagination? The others—priest, teacher, saint, statesman, warrior—hold us to the path of history. They keep us chained to the rock, that the vultures may eat out our hearts. It is the artist who has the courage to go against the crowd; he is the unrecognized "hero of our time"—and of all time.

We are now deep in the period (which began with the French Revolution) signalized by Nostradamus as "the vulgar advent." Everything points towards a

smash-up. Again and again the leaders of the world have demonstrated that they are incapable of solving the problems which beset us. To be more accurate, we should speak of "the" problem, since it is the same age-old one of how to live together on this earth in peace and harmony. Grave and acute as the situation now may be, it is probably not unprecedented in the long, and mostly unknown, history of man. How many times the current has been shut off, how many times the light has gone out, no one knows. All we do know for a certainty is that the creative spirit is incapable of being annihilated. Man *is* capable of solving this age-old problem, and far greater ones too. The artists —I take the liberty of calling them such—who have guided and inspired the race, the great spirits who have kept the flame alive, have always made use of a language which, because symbolic, had the flavor of the eternal. "*My kingdom is not of this earth.*" That is symbolic language, from the mouth of the greatest artist that ever lived. Unless an artist accepts these words as his very own he is merely a dabbler, a maker of words and not a creator. Which explains, perhaps, why the very great have written little or nothing at all.

"What is the worst?" writes R. H. Blyth. "Sin, suffering, death. If only we can be lifted up by these waves, instead of being submerged by them, we shall be free. Free from what? Free from the illusion that we are not free. Our illusions that we are not (now) free, are our hopes. Our hopes, for a better condition than we are now in, are not only the cause of grief, but the grief itself." *

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* Zen in *English Literature and Oriental Classics:* The Hokuseido Press, Tokyo, 1948.

Let us face it . . . what is the worst, for an artist? To be silenced? I doubt it. One who is really a force, a mouthpiece of God, will make himself heard without opening his lips. But what a blow it would be, what a masterful stroke, if by common consent the artists all over the world would voluntarily silence themselves! It is, to be sure, an unthinkable situation. When you say artist, alas, you say ego. Nevertheless, try to think for a moment what absolute confusion, bewilderment and bedevilment would ensue as a result of such strategy. Think what it would be like to hear the roar of the mob, nothing but this voice of the mob! No doubt about it, the world would blow itself to smithereens.

The European knows the power and the fury of the mob; he has experienced it numerous times. America has never known a revolution, or a great plague. America has thus far kept the mob in hand, by deluding it into believing that it is getting what it wants. As Chesterton says somewhere: "Some beautiful ideal runs through this people, but it runs aslant." The last World War, unspeakably hideous, was not waged by barbarians; it was conducted by the foremost nations of the world, the "cultured" nations. At least, the nations engaged looked upon themselves as such. Is this, then, the be-all and end-all of culture? Does it reach its maximum of achievement in this unholy crusade of mutual extermination? Wherein lies the mighty role of art? Do artists also kill one another? They most certainly do. With few exceptions they too, in times of panic, go the way of the mob, often aiding and abetting the impotent puppets who unleash and direct the

slaughter. Admitting this, I nevertheless firmly believe that no world order, no world harmony, is possible until the artist assumes leadership. I mean by this that the artist in man must come to the fore, over against the patriot, the warrior, the diplomat, the fanatical idealist, the misguided revolutionary. It is not against the gods man must rebel—the gods are with him, if he but knew it!—but against his own mediocre, vulgar, blighted spirit. He must free himself to look upon the world as his own divine playground and not as a battlefield of contending egos. He must lift himself by his own bootstraps, so to speak. He must throw away his crutches. Above all other men, the artist has this power to free himself. More than any man he knows that what he desires is attainable, that what he imagines is true and real, the only truth, the only reality. His function is to imbue his fellowman, by whatever means he possesses, with this ineluctable view of things. Let it not be said that he lacks the means. The true artist will forge the means to make his message transparent. No matter how black the picture may look, he has everything on his side. He is the only earthly being who is truly sovereign, provided he acknowledge to himself that the source of his power and inspiration is divine—and accessible to all.

Man has proved himself a thinker; man has proved himself a maker; man has proved himself a dreamer. He has yet to prove—to himself above all—that he is completely *man.* Of what use the great religions, the great philosophies, the sciences, the arts, of what use the noble ideals—every people has had them in turn—if we cannot make way for man? Where is man? What

has become of him amidst his teeming creations? If God is absent from man's work, how much more so is man himself?

To travel about in Europe is a treat for an American because it is like entering a honeycomb after a long sojourn in the open desert. At every step one is made aware of the continuous, persistent, indefatigable efforts of this creature called man. It cries out from architecture, paving blocks, monuments, landscapes, factories, museums, libraries, schools, churches, fortresses, from everything one looks at or touches or senses directly or indirectly. It makes itself felt even in the air one breathes. Man the builder, man the hunter, man the warrior, man the worshiper, man the lover, man the maker of words and of music, man the fabricator of the most subtle and the most deadly essences, man the keeper and the prisoner of man. Everywhere man, man, man: *his* work, *his* achievements, *his* longings, *his* hopes, *his* dreams, *his* failures, *his* deceptions and betrayals. Sometimes he has worked for the glory of God, but more often for the advancement of the devil. There he is, today as of yore, squirming and twisting, elbowing his way, wriggling through knotholes, tramping upon the dead, taking advantage of the weak, pushing on, forever pushing on, towards an invisible goal. The future. Always the *bright* future! Not for a moment can he cease his activity, glorious or dismal though it may be. What demon possesses him? To what end this frightful, monstrous striving? Is he slaving to make the world a better place? Is it for his progeny that he is concerned or for himself? Whichever way he answers it is a lie. He does not know why he struggles, or for what. He

is caught up in a mechanism which is beyond his understanding. He marches on, head down, eyes closed, conditioned so from birth. *That is man,* in the large—European man, American man, China man, Soviet man, man the world over, wherever there is culture and civilization. And with all this "progress" he has not advanced an inch. He stands at the same frontier he faced fifty thousand, or a hundred thousand, years ago. He has only to make a jump (inwardly) and he will be free of the clockwork. But he can't. He won't. With an obstinacy unthinkable he refuses to believe in himself, refuses to assume his full powers, refuses to raise himself to his ordained stature. He elects for Utopia rather than Reality. He professes to believe that things *can* be different—by which he always means "better"—while remaining himself the same. He has invented a complete catalogue of vile and scabrous epithets which he is ever ready to sling at those who think and act differently, that is, think and act as he himself would like to, if he had the courage. He has created enemies out of thin air. He has voluntarily enrolled in a phantom war which promises never to end. He has, moreover, deluded himself into thinking that this is the only right course to pursue. He would convince the animal world of his truth and righteousness, if he could. And wherever he appears—or erupts—he leaves a scar upon the face of the earth. Now he toys with the idea of harnessing the planets, as well as the spaces between, in order to carry on his ghastly, ghostly work of despoliation. Why does he stop at the planets? Why not ransack the entire universe? What's to hinder? Give him enough rope and, by God, he will do just this. He is now at that ripe stage of devolution

wherein he is foolish enough to believe that he can take the universe apart and destroy it piece by piece—just to prove to himself that he is not impotent. He would unseat the Creator, if he had enough humility left to conceive of something greater than himself.

In his steadfast march towards utter annihilation it is conceivable that he will arrive one day at that quixotic point in time and consciousness when it will become as clear as a bell to him that he has neither created nor destroyed a blessed thing . . . not a thing. . . . not even a speck, a crumb. All that he tortured, maimed, butchered, annihilated (as he thought) will then rise up before him and mock him. He will stand alone in the great void, the supreme symbol of hollowness and emptiness. And he will be seized with such a panic that the shaking of his bones will sound in his ears like the rattle of dice in a box.

And when, precisely, do you imagine all this will take place? Why, any o'clock now. Is time so important? He has already mutilated and butchered billions of his kind, to say nothing of the birds and beasts, or the microbes, or those devastating ideas which he fears even more than microbes. Let him roam the universe entire, armed with his puny inquisitional weapons. What are another million years in the face of self-discovery? Time is a hangman's rope. Let it stretch wide and taut!

And you still think Europe is a better place for the artist? Of course! Why not? Europe, Timbuctoo, Easter Island, Patagonia, Beluchistan . . . what difference does it make? *Anywhere but the place you're in.* That's present-day logic. Take your poor, weak, suffering carcass and expose it to other germs, other

humiliations. Here you scratch yourself to death; there you bite yourself to death. Where here, where there? Why, *anywhere,* of course. Know, to begin with, that you are a martyr, and you will begin composing the most heavenly songs. When you burn you will be able to sing them with a will. For that is your lot, that is your destiny. Thank the good Lord that you are not as other men. Flaunt your otherness and you will earn more stripes—bloody ones, what I mean. Yours to howl and gnash the teeth. Learn to do it well and you may earn the Nobel Prize. And don't forget, when it comes your turn to address the Royal Stockholm Academy, that one of the great blessings of civilization is the electric chair.

To come back to Europe . . . Europe, when one lives it in the mind, is almost like any other place on earth. The one difference, perhaps, is that in Europe all these thoughts are familiar, all these thoughts can and do find expression, or, now and again, suppression. You can think almost *anything,* in Europe. You can *be* almost anything there. Europe is a ferment, a constant ferment. And where there is constant ferment it matters little whether you are at the bottom or the top. The important thing is to realize that it is an intangible, spiritual crucible which is in ferment and not an atomic energy plant.

In that biographical rhapsody called *Napoleon,* in which Elie Faure gives us an awesome glimpse into the soul of Europe—its hidden fires, its frenzied struggles, its meteoric illuminations, its incorrigible anarchy—there comes a passage which goes thus:

"I do not think that Napoleon ever indicated an ideal aim to reach, an aim demanding belief in one of the

entities—justice, liberty, happiness—with which it is so easy to stir the multitudes. He consistently addressed himself to their latent energy, which he developed by the most virile means, to their sense of honor, which he invoked, to their spirit of emulation, which he exalted. The social optimism of popular leaders, on the other hand, the optimism which holds before the people a metaphysical or social idol for them to capture, demands an immediate abdication of their own liberty. In order to make others believe, they, the leaders, must believe in realities situated outside themselves and accessible to all, not by means of personal risk and personal effort but by submission to a certain number of commands, to transgress which is represented as a crime. . . ."

Once again the herd is ready to stampede. Beneath all the ferment there is an ominous silence, an attitude of lying in wait, like a beast of prey. Europe is ready to spring into action—but very likely in a direction which no one at present can possibly suspect. Today, seemingly exhausted, obviously divided, without leadership and with no clear apparent goal, she seems utterly ineffectual. The error which realists are only too prone to make is to confound the apparent with the actual. Europe is quite capable of making a *volte-face* overnight. Even in her present state of bewilderment and anguish, with nothing to salve her wounded pride, Europe possesses sufficient poise, sufficient equilibrium, to make the most momentous decisions. Let us not forget that all the striking figures in European history—and what a galaxy they represent—have been individuals, men *and* women, endowed with extraordinary imagination. It is a gift revealed as much in a

St. Francis as in a Napoleon, in a Dante as in a Rabelais, in a Marquis de Sade as in a Joan of Arc. The daring which made the great saints, the great heretics, the great scientists, the great philosophers, the great artists, the great "poets of action," is a permanent attribute of the European soul. Without it, no Europe.

If there is one thing that permeates Europe through and through it is art. This constant communication with the spirit pervading all life renders Europe at once potent and vulnerable. The dilemma now facing her makes it imperative to see it through in her own way—that is, passionately, poetically, recklessly—or compromise and go the way of the Gadarene swine. My belief is that she will follow the dictates of her own artistic conscience. My conviction is that by means of the particular creative energy which is distinctly hers she will find a solution to the dilemma, a solution, needless to say, *bouleversante* for the rest of the world.

The day of wrath is upon us. The way has been shown us again and again, but we have chosen to walk in darkness. When the lights go out let us be thankful if we have left enough inner radiance to glow like the glow-worm. We have made too much—and too little—of the dazzling light of genius. For ages we have been content to bathe in the sputtering phosphorescence which our men of genius have given off. We have sat back and watched the spectacle instead of taking fire ourselves. And finally we have substituted a cold fire —that nothing might be harmed, nothing destroyed, by sparks of ecstasy or of madness.

"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and

stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!"

Thus singeth Isaiah—Chapter 31, Verse 1.

But I say unto you: "Even though all our creations be brought to nothingness, even though the good perish with the wicked, even though the prophets themselves be silenced, nothing will prevent the coming of Zion!"

SIGFRIED GIEDION was born in Switzerland, in 1893. He has been General Secretary of the International Congresses for Modern Architecture since 1928. Mr. Giedion has taught at Harvard and written and lectured extensively. His clarity and keen insight have made him an eminent figure in architecture. His book *Time and Architecture* is one of the most valued books in the field.

The State of Contemporary Architecture

THE REGIONAL APPROACH

The state of contemporary architecture today is such that a historian is compelled to refer back to points that, one could have thought, had been made abundantly clear many years ago. But during recent years the origins of contemporary architecture, and indeed its very nature, have again become clouded and confused. No single country, no single movement, no single personality can be claimed to explain the coming about of contemporary architecture. Trends shuttle to and fro, from one country, one movement, one personality to another, and become woven into a subtle pattern that portrays the emotional expression of the period.*

* From *Architectural Record*, January, 1954.

There is a word that we refrain from using to describe contemporary art. This is the word "style." In a primitive sense the word "stylus" was used even in Roman times to describe different manners of writing, but "style" did not come into general use to describe specific periods until the 19th century, when different periods of architecture were analyzed according to a materialistic description of details of form. Today, the moment we fence architecture in within a notion of "style" we open the door to a purely formalistic approach. Purely formalist comparisons have about the same effect on the history of art as a bulldozer upon a flower garden. Everything becomes flattened into nothingness, and the underlying roots are destroyed.

The architect of today regards himself not merely as the builder of an edifice, but also as a builder of contemporary life. In other words the architect of today refuses to consider himself a mere *confiseur* (pastry-cook) employed to attach some trimmings within and without after the structure has been delivered to him by the engineer. No, the architect has himself to conceive it as an integrated whole. Like all real artists, he has to realize in advance the main emotional needs of his fellow citizens, long before they themselves are aware of them. A wholeness, a togetherness of approach, has become a "must" for any creative spirit.

All this is involved in the reason why we today abstain from labelling the contemporary movement with the word "style." It is no "style" in the 19th century meaning of form characterization. It is an approach to the life that slumbers unconsciously within our contemporaries.

It seems—and this cannot be too often repeated—that all creative efforts in contemporary art have, as their common denominator, a new conception of space; and this is so no matter how different the movements themselves may appear from one another. This new representation of space contrasts fundamentally with the Renaissance perspective and the consequences that developed from its single focal point.

It has been stated over and over again—indeed I have said it myself—that it is the plane, which earlier had lacked any emotional content, that has become the constituent element of our new representation. Futhermore there is no doubt that the use of the plane as a means of expression was evolved from cubism between 1910 and 1914. On two pages of *Space, Time & Architecture* (page 362-363) I tried to show how the same spirit emerged in several different countries, by presenting a visual comparison of a collage by Braque, a painting by Mondrian, an architectural study by Malewich, a country house by van Doesburg and van Eesteren, and Gropius' Bauhaus.

The art magazines have recently been stressing that "the right angle and primary colors used with black, white and gray, disposed in an asymmetrical arrangement" were the basic elements of "de Stijl." This factual analysis is perfectly correct as far as it goes, but it does not touch the reason behind the use of these simple elements—the essential heart of the matter which "de Stijl" shared in common with the whole contemporary movement. This was the *introduction of the plane* as a constituent element to express the new anti-renaissance space conception. The right angle, the

vertical, and—to a certain extent—the primary colors are by-products and not essential features of the modern conception.

It is well known that the "de Stijl" people around van Doesburg never formed themselves into a formal group, as for example the Futurists did. "De Stijl" consisted of various individualists working in different places. There was sometimes a certain amount of collaboration, as at one time between Doesburg and Oud, and, in the twenties, between Doesburg, the young van Eesteren and Rietveld. But on the whole they remained individualists. J. J. P. Oud (whose early accomplishments will always form part of the history of architecture) is typical of these individualists. When I met him for the first time in 1926 he even then emphasized "I was never a member of 'de Stijl.'" And, in his own way, Piet Mondrian (who called his work "neo-plasticism") expressed a similar standpoint. It was indeed just this free cooperation of strong individualists, often in dissension with one another, that gave the Dutch movement its undeniable mental strength.

The word "style" when used for contemporary architecture is often combined with another password label. This is the epithet "international." It is quite true that for a short period in the twenties the term "international" was used, especially in Germany, as a kind of protest to differentiate contemporary architecture from "Blut and Boden" advocates who were trying to strangle at birth anything and everything imbued with a contemporary spirit. But the use of the word "international" quickly became harmful and constantly shot back like a boomerang. "International" architecture—"the international style"—so went the arguments, is

something that hovers in mid-air, with no roots anywhere.

All contemporary architecture worthy of the name is constantly seeking to interpret a way of life that expresses our period. If history teaches us anything it is that man has had to pass through different spiritual phases of development, just as, in prehistoric times, he had to pass through different physical stages. There are some signs that go to show that a certain cultural standard is now slowly encompassing the entire world. In historic periods cultural areas have usually been more limited in extent, but in the prehistoric era—the hundreds of thousands of years of dark ages—we find everywhere the hand axe, the *coup de poing*. This hand axe is a universal, triangular, pear-shaped tool whose sides slope to a fine edge. It has been found in China, in Africa, in the gravel bed of the Somme in the heart of France, in the Ohio valley. Everywhere this flint implement was shaped the same, as though the wide-flung continents had been neighboring villages.

The way of life that is now in formation is a product of the mentality of Western man. Again, as in the time of Neanderthal man, it passes round the whole world, only now the tempo is vastly accelerated and the speed has become excessive.

When I had recently to write a short foreword for a Japanese edition of *Space, Time & Architecture* I somehow felt it my duty to explain that Western man has now, very slowly, become aware of the harm he has inflicted by his interference with the way of life of other civilizations: whether it has been interference with the natural rhythms of the lives of primitive peoples, which have been the root cause of their bodily

and mental persistence since prehistoric times; or whether it has been an injection of the rational Western mentality into the oldest existing civilizations, without also presenting any worthy antidote. But, even while writing this, I was obliged to add that Western civilization is itself actually in a stage of transition. Experience is slowly showing us that the rationalist and exclusively materialist attitude upon which the latest phase of Western civilization has been grounded, is insufficient. Full realization of this fact can lead us slowly towards a new hybrid development —a cross between Western and Eastern.

Now that we no longer adhere to a creed of production for production's sake, the civilization that is now in the making draws closer to the mental outlook that is shared by primitive man and Eastern man. We in the West are again becoming conscious of something that they never forget: that the continuity of human experience always exists alongside and in contrast to our day-to-day existence.

This may serve to strengthen a realization that the image of this emerging civilization, especially our particular interest—the form of contemporary architecture —cannot be described by so drained and bloodless a term as an "International Style." Moreover the term itself is a complete misnomer, as is the case with many other "styles." It is well known for instance that the term "Gothic Style" when used in the 18th century designated a form of barbarism. It was only after the English had rediscovered the Gothic that it became used as a term of adoration. "Baroque" also was first used to describe something over-extravagant, irregular or undisciplined. But all such labels were only applied

by later generations. The architects of the Gothic or Baroque periods gave no stylistic names to their buildings. They just built, as they had to build, in a contemporary manner—and so do we! So let us drop, once and for all, such misleading formalist designations.

It is true that our period, just like past periods, has a common mental outlook and a commonly recognized method of expressing its emotional content. As the outlook changes, our attitude towards our environment—the region or country in which our structures are rising—also changes. Contemporary architecture and painting are embraced by a pervading mentality—the spirit of this period. But from out the innumerable possibilities of each region, each period selects just those which correspond with, or help to express, its own specific emotional needs. Now that we are separated by several decades from the birth period of the early twenties, we are able to discern that certain regional habits and regional traditions lay concealed within the germinal nuclei of various contemporary movements.

Two examples, one from Holland, the other from France, may serve to make this point clear. First, Holland. When we look at a painting by Mondrian or at one of van Doesburg's architectural schemes their abstract forms (Mondrian called them "neutral forms") seem very far removed from any specifix regional influence. They seem so, but they are not.

At the Congress of Art Critics in Amsterdam in 1951, for which the "de Stijl" exhibition was first assembled, I was asked to speak on this movement. Rietveld, who was in the audience, sprang to his feet and sharply protested when I tried to show the inner ties that exist between Dutch tradition and these so-called "neutral

forms": how, in fact, these forms are rooted in the Dutch region and in the Dutch mentality.

In the 17th century—the great age of Dutch painting—and perhaps even later, no other people laid such stress on the plane surfaces of interior walls, or of the careful organization of the position of doors and windows. Similarly one can note today the careful manner in which the Dutch gardener lays out his fields of red, white and yellow tulips. Certainly I would never wish this to be interpreted as though I were explaining Mondrian's paintings as reproductions of tulip fields! But I do maintain that the organized plane surface is in no other country so prevalent as here, in the region of the Polders. It is not mere chance that neither the Russians, nor Germans, nor French made such use of the plane surface, framing it and extracting it from innumerable details. The plane surface, for reasons which do not need to be reiterated, is a constituent element of contemporary art: and it seems to me that van Doesburg's and van Eesteren's simple drawings of the transparent interior of one of their projected houses is one of the most elucidating achievements of "de Stijl," and one which helped enormously to clarify the minds of their contemporaries in other countries.

France's contribution comes from another source. Ever since her daring experiments in Gothic cathedrals, France has shown a great facility and a great eagerness to experiment with new forms of structure. We have only to recall the Halle des Machines or the Eiffel Tower of 1889; and here it is interesting to note that the painter Delaunay (a representative of the so-called "orphic cubism") was first inspired by Gothic

churches (1909) and later by the structure of the Eiffel Tower whose poetic content was first revealed by him and the poet Guillaume Apollinaire.

France's early and extensive use of ferroconcrete as a means of architectural conception is only one more link in the same chain. Already around 1900 Tony Garnier, in his Prix de Rome project, used the new construction method of ferroconcrete in his Cité Industrielle for all kinds of buildings. Perret soon followed with his Paris houses, garages, theaters; and one of Le Corbusier's first sketches of the ferroconcrete skeleton construction for the House Domino (1915) is as revealing as van Doesburg's sketch with its intersecting planes.

These are but two examples of regional contributions to a universal architectural conception. But one thing more: it has not been necessary for the architect to be a native of the country in which he is working in order to be able to express its specific conditions. We all know how Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel in Tokyo withstood the earthquake better than Japanese structures. The reason is the modern approach encompasses both cosmic and terrestrial considerations. It deals with eternal facts. It has been mentioned already that the aspect of the new structures may look very different from the traditional appearance of the buildings of a certain region. There is also a great apparent difference between a wide open redwood or ferroconcrete house built in the kindly homogenous climate of California and a weekend house built for the tropical conditions of Brazil. In form these two houses, built by Richard S. Neutra

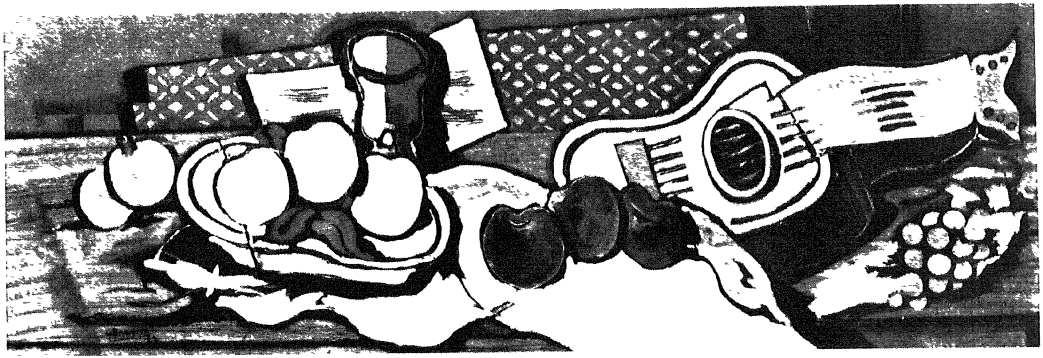
and Oscar Niemeyer, have practically nothing in common, yet both are imbued with the same contemporary spirit. Formalistic analysis will not help us here.

I would like to give a name to the method of approach employed by the best contemporary architects when they have to solve a specific regional problem—such as a building for the tropics or the West Coast, for India or for South America—whether it is for a house, a government center or a problem in urbanism. This name is the *New Regional Approach.*

I am thinking of some walk-up apartments built in Morocco by Candilis and Woods for a very poor population who now live, as in Brazil and other tropical climates, in "bidon-villes" or tin shacks made from old gasoline cans. In this case the problem was the erection of several thousand dwellings very rapidly, very cheaply and employing only the simplest techniques. Each dwelling has two bedrooms that open onto a patio living room surrounded by a six foot wall that insures privacy for the family. Great care is taken to see that every corner of the dwelling is at some time penetrated by the bacteria-destroying beams of the sun. In some row houses built in Cuba by Wiener and Sert for the better paid workers, no glass is used, but instead a modern version of the lattice-like openings common around the Caribbean. Each dwelling has two bedrooms and a living room that is wide open to a private patio. The neighborhood unit model for 8,000 inhabitants shows how these simple units can be variously grouped.

Examples such as these imply that the modern architect should not strive to produce an external appearance in conformity with traditional buildings. Some-

EDGAR DEGAS *Portrait*



GEORGES BRAQUE *Still Life*

GEORGES ROUAULT *Christ Head*

JACQUES VILLON *My Brother Marcel Duchamp*

AMEDEO MODIGLIANI *Cariatide*

PABLO PICASSO *Mother and Child*

MARC CHAGALL *The Artist's Inspiration*

HENRI MATISSE *Vase et Grenades*

ANDRÉ MASSON *The Artist's Sons*

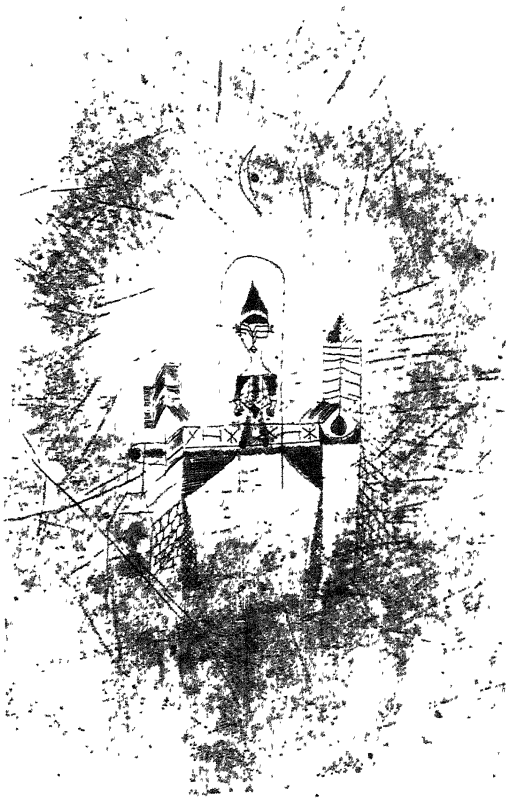
MARCEL GROMAIRE *Three Nudes in a Landscape*

PABLO PICASSO *The Artist and the Model*

MUSIC *Ida*

JOHNNY FRIEDLAENDER *The Woman and Cat*

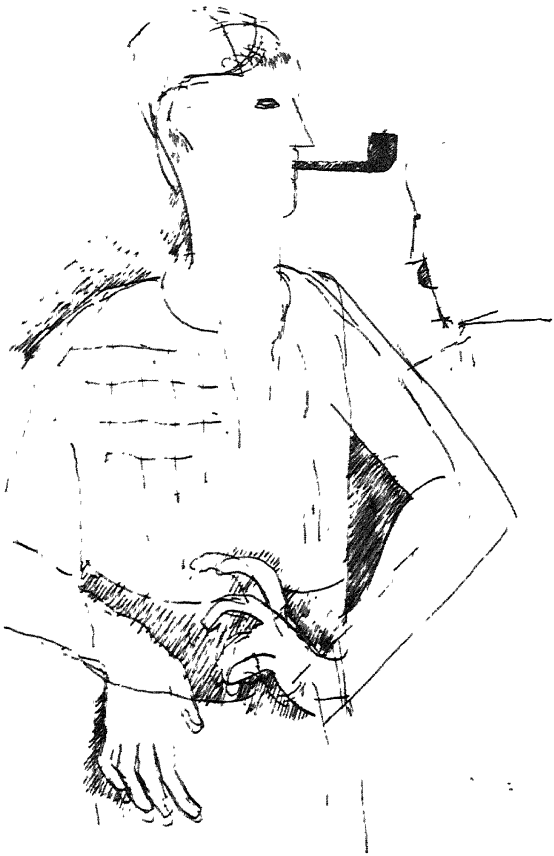
GOMERY *Man and Horse*



PAUL KLEE *Harlequin on a Bridge*

GEORGES BRAQUE *La Femme à la Toilette*

PIERRE BONNARD *Vollard*



ROGER DE LA FRESNAYE *Man with Pipe*

JULES PASCIN *Model*

V. KASIULIS *The Model*

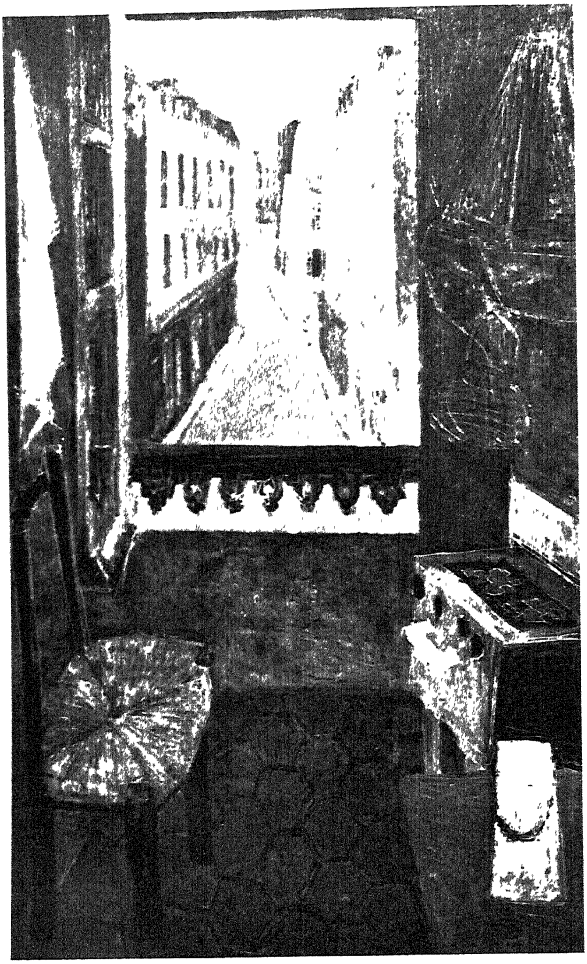
MICHAEL ARAM *Mother and Child*

HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC *The Passenger*

MARC CHAGALL *Wedding under the Canopy*

DANY *Flowers*

CLAVÉ *Gargantua*

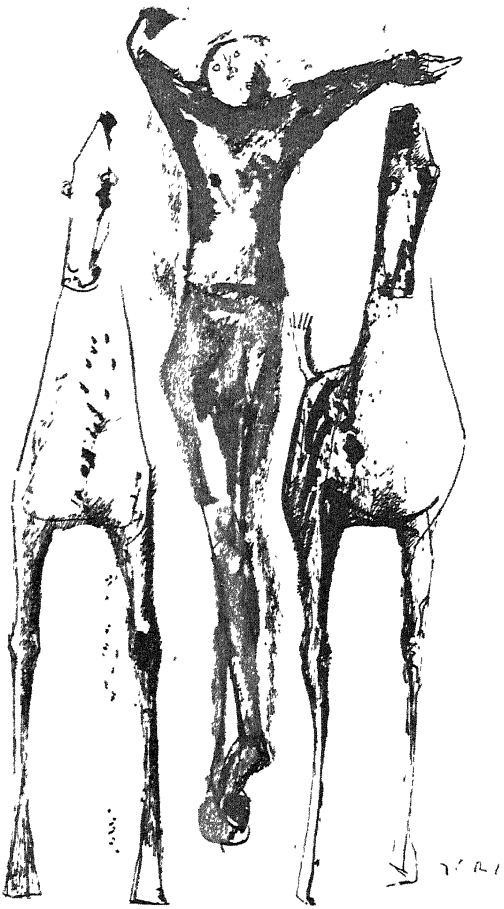


RAYMOND GUERRIER *Vue of Paris*

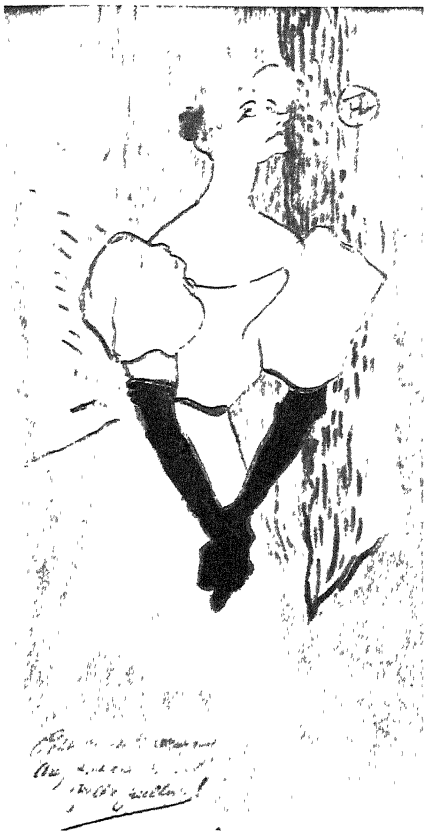
PIGNON *The Man and the Child*

JACQUES LIPCHITZ *Sketch for Sacrifice*

HENRI MATISSE *Self Portrait*

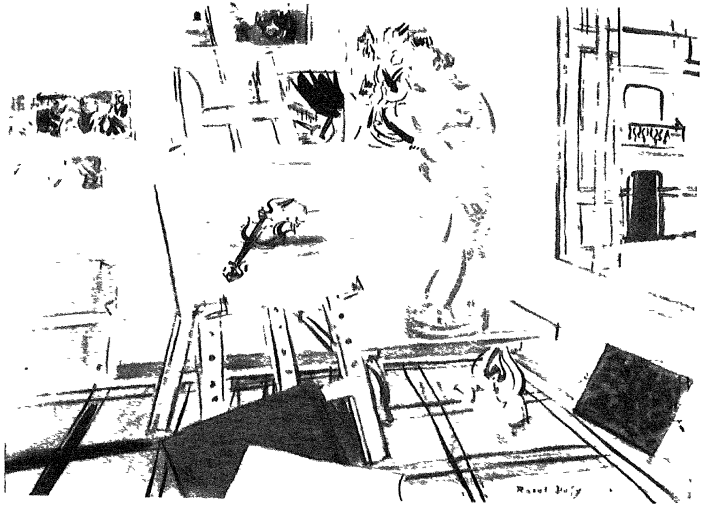


MARINO MARINI *Boy with Two Horses*



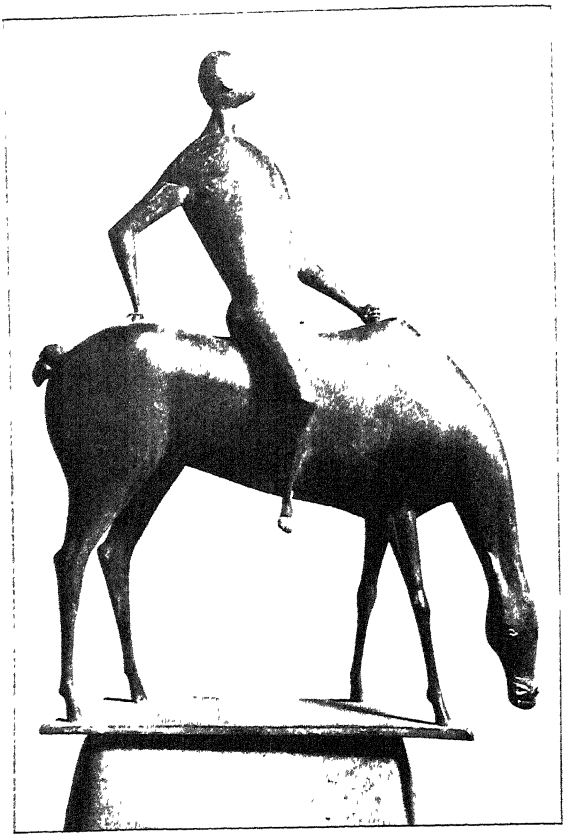
HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC *Yvette Guilbert*

MAURICE UTRILLO *Rue Mont-Cenis, Maison de Berlioz*



RAOUL DUFY

Interior



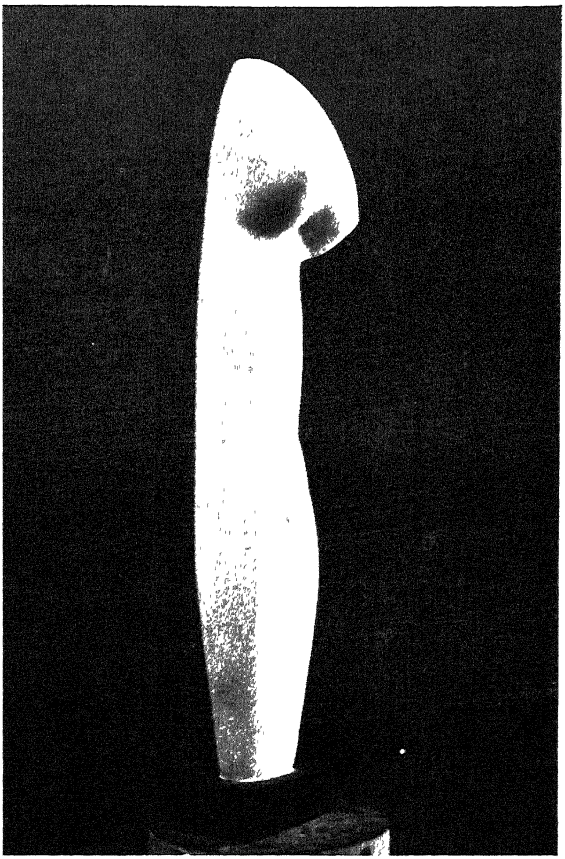
MARCELLO MASCHERINI *Man and Horse*

THEODORE ROSZAK *Skylark*

UMBERTO MASTROIANNI *Woman*

MORLEY TROMAN *Embrace*

HENRI LAURENS *Myrmidia*

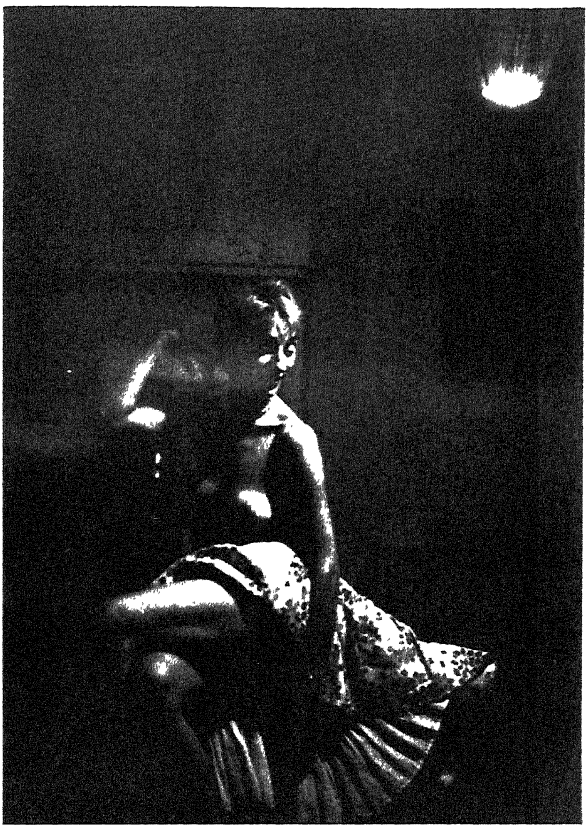


H. HENGHES *Torso*

JOSÉ DE CREEFT *Voluptas*

AMEDEO MODIGLIANI *Head*

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON *Georges Rouault*



FERNANDO PUMA *Dancer at Rest*

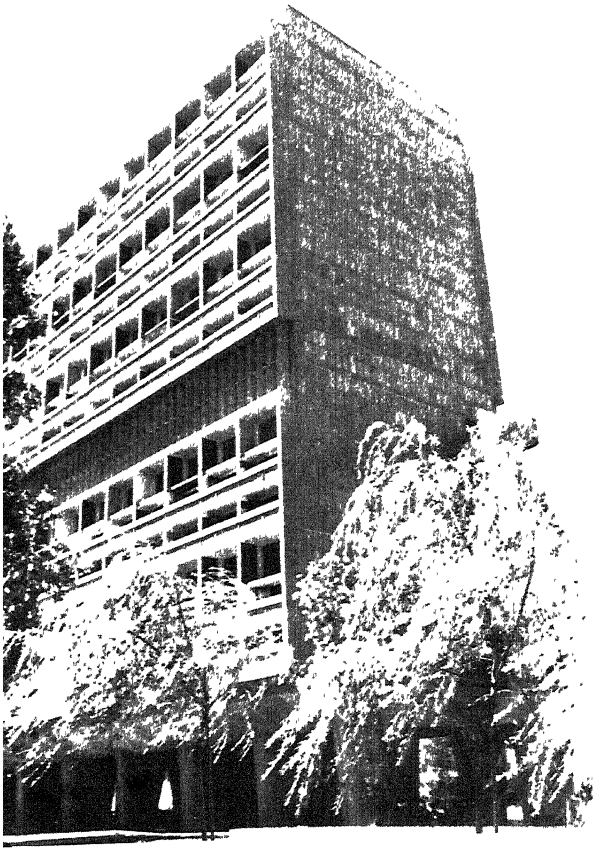
ROGER DE LA FRESNAYE *Man with Pipe*

ERNST HAAS

Positano

Photo by Gerda Peterich *Merce Cunningham*

THE ACROPOLIS *Athens*



CHARLES EDOUARD LE CORBUSIER *Marseilles Building*

times the new buildings will conform to a certain extent, sometimes they will be basically different. This difference may be due to two reasons: sometimes it will be because of new production methods and the use of new materials; sometimes, more importantly, it will be caused by the new aesthetic, the new emotional expression, that the builder is giving to the habitat of man.

The regional approach that satisfies both cosmic and terrestrial conditions is a developing trend, but there is also another symptom that is emerging, and that hints at the many-sided face of contemporary architecture. In contemporary painting many problems come forward which can also be discerned in the earliest beginnings of art. Architecture is different from painting; it is not so intimately related to man's direct projection of what flows in the subconscious mind. Yet we cannot leave unnoticed a certain symptom which has been appearing in architecture, above all in the recent work of Frank Lloyd Wright (especially since 1940). We can now follow the exciting path that the human mind had to travel before he came to standardize (if we may call it this) upon the rectangular house with its square or rectangular rooms. We are all born with this rectangular house and are so accustomed to live with it that it seems it could never have been otherwise. Yet it is important that an artist like Frank Lloyd Wright is plunging so deeply into problems that concerned the human spirit at a time when mankind was contemplating the transition from the nomadic herdsman to the settled agriculturalist.

At the very beginning of architecture the paramount type was not the square house, but the curvilinear

house—sometimes round, sometimes oval, sometimes freely curving. Now it tries to make a reappearance. Sometimes this is dictated by mechanistic reasons: such as the mast house of Buckminster Fuller, or the use of a central mechanical core. But Wright follows exclusively the line of his artistic vision, maybe adapted to the site, maybe adapted to the man who is to inhabit the house, maybe under the compulsion of expressing that which slumbers in himself. It is not my intention to discuss the pros and cons of this kind of contemporary architecture, but it seems a duty not to ignore it. What we need more today than anything else is *imagination*, but this subject must wait for a later article.

THEODORE ROETHKE was born in Michigan, in 1908. He has taught at Lafayette, Pennsylvania State and Bennington. At present he is a professor of English at the University of Washington, Seattle. Mr. Roethke has received two Guggenheim Fellowships and an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His poetry appears in many important magazines, and he has had four books of poetry published.

A Rouse for Stevens

TO BE SUNG IN A YOUNG POET'S SALOON

Wallace Stevens:—What's *he* done?
He can play the Flitter-Flad;
He can see the Second Son
Spinning through the Lordly Cloud;

He's Imagination's Prince;
He can plink the Scitter-Bum;
How he does the Lonely Buzz:
Brings the Secret: right in—There!

Wallace, Wallace, *Wo ist er?*
Never met him, Dutchman dear.
If I ate and drank like him,
I would be a Chanticleer.

(Together)

Speak it from the face out clearly,
Here's a *Mensch* but can sing dandy:
Er ist niemals ausgepoopen,
Altes wunderkind.

(Audience)

Roar 'em, whore 'em, cockalorum,
The muses, they must *all* adore him!
Wallace Stevens,—are we *for* him?
Brother, he's our father!

FERNANDO PUMA

The Creator's Challenge

Café Filtre is black and the tang and odor are strong. It awakens the senses quickly. The stove lit, I wind my way down from my Paris atelier on Rue De Seine. Directly across the narrow street is Gallery P. It is the most successful left bank gallery. Today three huge paintings hang in the windows—one a fifth-rate copy of Jackson Pollock (dripped by a Canadian, in Paris, soon to exhibit in New York); a black and red imitation of Chinese calligraphy; and a sad, dark spot, called color, on a white canvas. These insipid color patchworks are typical of paintings seen in London, Paris, Rome, New York, et al. Decorative fabric designs or meaningless explosiveness is the academy of the *1950's*. However, true art is not of the moment. Seer P exhibited Miro and Picasso long ago, so now he is a high priest of the Cult. If a painter is a member of the Automatic or Geometric Tribe, his existence is assured. Yet, Abstractionism is à la mode now.

This reminds me of the Pierre Matisse Gallery. In 1942 in New York, when I was a radio art critic, the Matisse Gallery moved to new quarters in the Fuller Building on East 57th Street. I was invited, along with the seventy odd other critics, museum directors, collectors and artists, to the opening cocktail party. The room was crowded and the hum of vibrant, stimulating

conversation buzzed as the martinis flowed. As at openings, few people looked at the paintings. ' walls sparkled with Chagalls, Picassos, Miros, Mat and a beautiful sensitive Modigliani. Suddenly I came ill, not from over-imbibing, but as I lool around the room and listened to the gay chatte noticed that the museum people were joking with museum people (the same ones they had been wc ing with an hour before), the collectors were comp ing notes with the collectors and the critics w expressing enigmatic witticisms to each other. ' artists, like Alice in Wonderland, were wandering themselves. Marc Chagall, eyes bright, leaned aga a side wall, a wistful smile on his lips. Not one gu spoke to him during the entire party!

These stories, twelve years apart, somehow con the duplicity in the art world. There is a tremend distance between those who buy and/or present . those who create. The creator paints a picture, c poses a symphony, writes a novel. He is sucked with birthing. Bang! Bang! Time is not cloc energy not spared, health not guarded. Anything pull the subconscious and awaken the depth wit and spew out golden nuggets. Then he is forcec spend himself in a succession of traumatic experien He must meet Mr. Right. Everybody must find Right. Mr. Right presents and sells. Love, not mo must be the basis for a happy marriage. And love, mercenary gain, must be behind the producer, gallery owner, the publisher. Oh, to find the man hind the scenes who understands and possesses intuitive knowledge of the future! This is rarity it

Art is an international canon of truth. Now, n

than ever, genius spends itself on worry and selling and publicity. Rebellious ego becomes trademark. Humility is forced into the background. Dr. Kinsey writes that males reach their sexual peak at about eighteen years of age and thereafter steadily decline. There is truth too, that during youth there is a biological connection between sex and creating. The creative talent in the arts generally starts to weaken after forty, just when the artist is becoming known and recognized. It often takes ten to fifteen years of struggling, destroying and rebuilding before the violins play the victor's march and the public pays homage. Beethoven wrote his *Eroica* before he was thirty-four; Mozart was creating beautiful music before he was twenty; Wagner wrote Tannhauser and Lohengrin in his thirties and was barely forty when he began working on *The Ring*. Van Gogh, Seurat, Lautrec created all their masterpieces in their twenties and thirties. Shakespeare wrote *As You Like It* and *Hamlet* before he reached forty. It is well known Schopenhauer finished and published *The World As Will and Idea* at thirty-one; and Spinoza began his brilliant work in his early twenties.

It is not that a creator's intellectual or emotional powers are less after forty, but the pressure of living, physical hardships, a wife, perhaps children, and the constant carping and insensate stupidities of the vulgar, begin to take their toll. All true creators should be free of marital ties and financially solvent. The competitive striving should be for the highest form of creation; indolence would not be tolerated by fellow artists. How necessary to tinker, to explode, to boil and

bubble! The world has still such fire and beauty, such magical and significant art, to behold and enjoy.

The creator is alone. He travels worn paths with gloss feet and spins a web to bridge the gaps between knowing and knowing. He seeks the uncommon. He strips himself naked and lets the rain wash away grime and stereotyped thoughts. He loves the exotic, even erotic, forces the stress and strain to cut scythe-like through commonplace thoughts. Today, more than ever, the creator is forced to live a multiple existence.

Traveling through England one is astonished by the achievements the *Arts Council* has brought about in nine years. Starting in 1945, the English gave love and care and have nurtured their creative talents like exalted roses. The land of Shakespeare, Chaucer and Milton has bred new dancers, actors, who bring happiness and culture to the people. Now the government allocates nearly $2,000,000 yearly to the council and this sustains and brings a richer way of living. Since the English form of government and the mores of the people are so close to our own, this quotation from the *Arts Council* Booklet is pertinent:

"Although the Council's terms of reference cover the whole field of fine arts, in practice it limits its activities to music, opera, ballet, drama, poetry, painting and sculpture. As far as possible, it works through existing bodies connected with the promotion and performance of the arts; but, where no organization exists that can supply a local need, the Council itself is sometimes prepared to do so; and in such cases the net receipts of the events provided accrue to the Council's funds.

"*Concerts* are organized from headquarters, the Scottish and Welsh Offices and the English regional offices, in places where it appears likely that such pioneer work will arouse interest and stimulate local activity.

"*Poetry Readings* are occasionally organized in a similar way.

"*Play Tours* are sent out from London and from other centers to various parts of the country where theatres are few and opportunities for seeing stage performances scanty. Stress is laid on building up *Repertory Companies* of high standard; and in certain cases the Council has taken the initiative in setting up Repertory Theatre Companies as a step towards the establishment of civic theatres. Wherever direct action is taken, it is the Council's purpose that such activities shall eventually be taken over by independent local enterprises.

"*Art Exhibitions* are the Council's main activity in the visual arts. The average number of exhibitions in circulation at one time is about sixty. In a single year 109 different exhibitions have been shown in 255 places. These vary in size and importance from major international exhibitions such as French Tapestries, Van Gogh, Masterpieces from Alte Pinakotheka at Munich and Treasures from Vienna, to modest exhibitions, sometimes of reproductions instead of original works, which can be shown in places where there is no public gallery. With few exceptions, every exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue, which often contains many illustrations, and essays or notes by acknowledged experts embodying the results of original research. The services of guide lecturers are available.

The Council and its Scottish and Welsh Committees also buy pictures, sculpture and examples of graphic art from living artists for inclusion in its exhibitions.

"Do these concerts, poetry readings, play tours, directly managed repertory companies, and exhibitions represent the greater part of the Council's work? In terms of finance they represent less than one-quarter of the money the Council spends on the arts. The remaining three-quarters is paid in the form of grants, guarantees and loans to independent organizations.

"The Council works in association with certain national institutions such as the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the Sadler's Wells Foundation, the Old Vic, and the permanent symphony orchestras, and also certain festivals and provincial theatre repertory companies. These institutions and companies must satisfy the Council that they are properly constituted bodies or charitable trusts which exist to provide artistic service to the community, and that they have been accepted by Her Majesty's Board of Customs and Excise as being not conducted or established for profit and have been exempted by it from liability to pay Entertainments Duty. Financial arrangements of varying kind and degree may be made with each associated company; and for each the Council is prepared to act as sponsor with Government Departments and public bodies, testifying to the value of the work done in the interest of the nation."

In France there are government supported theatres —*The Comédie Francaise* and TNP. Both the Opera and Opera Comique receive complete support as well. These institutions are in Paris and are enjoyed by all the people, for the prices are comparatively low.

At the Opera tickets range from 300 francs to 1300 francs (85¢ to $3.75).

The arts are an integral part of Paris. The streets and century-heaped buildings reflect two thousand years of unique ancient beauty and rumbling truth. Since theatre is a vital part of the French life, it is interesting to know how a playwright gets his play produced. A play can be presented in Paris for about one fourth of the cost in New York. But to the French producer the sum is equally as formidable and probably, for the most part, unprocurable if the French government did not help with the financing. There is a committee of six in the *Beaux Arts* which decides who is given financial aid towards their play. The writer gives his script to a producer, and if he finds the play worthy, the producer and the theatre ask the committee if they can have money to present it. There are two methods of assistance. Either the money is advanced to the theatre or the money spent is deductible from the taxes. Oddly, it is the first play of a writer which has the most chance of being financed. There is a special committee which reads the first plays sent in. Nine out of ten times, if the play has merit, there will be money advanced. And the playwright need not be a Frenchman!

For instance, a Belgian named Jean Mogin had his first play, *Chacun Selon Sa Faim,* accepted and presented in 1949. It was a huge success. The play was presented at the *A Vieux Colombier Theatre* by Raymond Hermantier, the *Metteur en Scene.* Mogin was about thirty years old. His second play was not a success, but under these conditions one is not "through" in the theatre. Of course, the most famous of the play-

wrights who received aid in the theatre and made good is Jean Paul Satre. His *Les Mouches* was presented about ten years ago, and so France aided another truly creative artist. Incidentally, both Louis Jouvet and Jean Louis Barrault presented plays which received financial assistance from the *Beaux Arts,* until they became successful.

The small country of Belgium is extremely culture conscious. There is a National, an *Avant-Garde,* and a Literary Theatre. Some seventy-five actors and actresses are given contracts and they engage younger actors for extra parts. Because theatre, painting and music are part of the people's right, they can expect good art as they expect good schools. Wealth and culture must be intermingled for a people to last, for a nation to mature. A Belgian, for a small fee of seventy-five cents, can get a seat, enjoy a good play and help build a growing permanent theatre. And in turn the actors feel a security for they always have a large responsive audience to work for.

In the Scandinavian countries all the arts are fecund; there is fervent creativity. These countries have an astonishing original group of young artists, and they are supported by the state and by the people themselves. Every bar, hotel and restaurant has original paintings, all in the modern vein, and of excellent taste. The largest hotel bar in Oslo has thirty original Edward Munchs on the walls, a fortune in money and beauty; and also there is a twenty-foot stained-glass window executed by a young contemporary artist. There is practically no unemployment and most of the people do what they want to do and make a living at it. Last year in Sweden the people gave their beloved

King Gustave Adolf a birthday present. He was seventy years old. From April until November the Swedish people sent in donations, and on the king's birthday he was given $1,000,000 as a token of popular homage. There are only seven million inhabitants in Sweden. Certainly this is a handsome sum. King Gustave Adolf has now set up a committee, with himself as chairman, and is spending his time spending this gift to benefit and further the arts and the creators. For years to come the people of Sweden will be thankful in their hearts for the wisdom of the use of the king's largess. Little Sweden published three thousand more new books last year than the entire United States; and large beautifully designed book stores are almost as frequent as drug stores. Besides, Sweden is the only country in the world where a good poet can make a living solely from the sales of his books. Respect for culture and education in these Scandinavian countries is a symbol of a living fruition.

It is no secret that in the United States creators are forced to seek a livelihood outside of their own field. Only eight hundred actors made over $5000 in the theatre last year; some five hundred painters and sculptors made the magnificent sum of $400 in their profession; a writer takes a year or more to write and polish his novel and, if he is lucky and gets it published, he may make $1000. And what of the living expenses, cost of materials, and—, and— . . .

There are those who still decry the need for art. *Travail, Plaisir, Procréation. C'est tout!* However, history mirrors life of the future. And whose names are recorded, giving courage and hope, elevating the spirit? Whose names indeed? Is it Genghis Khan,

Alexander the Great, Caesar, Napoleon, Hitler, we proudly mention? Not the warriors, but the creators ease human sorrows and lead man from the mire. What great truths are found in Socrates, stirring pathos in Aristophanes, enthrallment in Beethoven, sublime eternity in Botticelli, wit and brilliance in Voltaire, magnificence in Michelangelo. And tomorrows will be remembered in the tragic greatness of Kathe Kollwitz, the suspended animation of Kafka, the magic of Stravinsky, Rouault's deep passion, Schweitzer's Olympian humanity, the electricity of Nijinsky, Shaw's crackling truths, and the startling innovations of Frank Lloyd Wright. This is monumental time-space! Recorded impressions giving reasons and hopes to halt the breath and strengthen the back, shake the weary head and start fresh, anew.

Can anything be done? Private philanthropy and foundations are excellent, but they are hardly enough. The government must allocate a definite sum each year supporting all the arts through an Arts Council. This Council must be above and beyond politics, as in the continental countries. Even France, which has changed governments nearly twenty times since the war has not discontinued the budget set aside for the furtherance of the arts. No one can find political favoritism in the running of the Old Vic or the theatre at Malmö. Culture needs years of evolution—consistent education to build an aware public. People cannot continue to put all their faith in materialism. The United States is cutting its emotional teeth. Our government must maintain the arts as it does the Post Offices and Health Departments. And I am not referring to another WPA. That was only partially the answer. It

was merely a financial life-belt. Artistic results were exceptions. Fine paintings should adorn public buildings, schools and hospitals. Inspiring scultpure should adorn our parks. In Belgium they use reproductions of Titians and Rubens on their money. Everyone with a franc is in touch with art. The White House in Washington should possess a great collection of art and encourage and patronize our foremost creators—not force them to pander for snobbish, political funds. Art must be a proud part of our national heritage.

Shall we start somewhere with the three million students? There would be governing bodies in all the arts, creators of proven merit, who will lead in a constructive way, opening the doors for the gifted and providing an answer for the talented and energetic citizens. Those people, too often, become American expatriots or devitalized American automatons.

Today's American atmosphere is permeated with formaldehyde, killing creators like butterflies in a chemist jar. On a radio discussion program in New York a few months ago, a learned moderator faced me, a professor from Queens College and the President of an Encyclopedia company. The discussion was Scandinavian Education vs. the American Education Methods. I was in favor of the broader non-materialistic approach of the Nordic countries. As an American, who has spent his adult life creating, and comprehending the problems of creators, I was quite overwhelmed by the timidity and sterility of the arguments of my opponents. The fear breeding fears, the suspicion of criticism, the blindness to the faults, shocked me. "Frank Lloyd Wright is unimportant! Grandma Moses is a great artist! The creator is given every chance and

is appreciated in this country! Artistic support is socialism!" These were a few of the pedantic statements and implications.

It is to laugh! But how can one laugh when millions of people listen with deep respect to these people of position and power. And when the program was finnished, the Queens professor told me he *agreed* with my premise and had even written several articles on the superiority of Scandinavian education. "But the times, you know . . ."

Yearly, the world over, the private art patron is becoming extinct. In the United States this rare bird contributes to Art Foundations as he does to the Red Cross or the Church. It is tax deductible. It is charitable. It is popular. Philanthropic foundations (Ford, Guggenheim, Rockefeller, Whitney, etc.) take care of a few creators, at most several thousand people from throughout our vast land and its dominions receive grants. Without them the United States would be an artistic dust bowl from coast to coast. Yes, seedlings are being planted, but there is need for much wider distribution and cultivation.

It is obligatory to recognize the needs of the creative people in our country and help them by exposing the near insane methods which cause lions to eat their own tails and die—as Hollywood, radio, TV are dying. And we must be careful, not all animals are regenerative.

DOROTHY PARKER, born 1893, lives in New York City. She is the author of many witty books of verse: *Enough Rope, Sunset Gun, Death and Taxes, Not So Deep as a Well.* Miss Parker co-authored with Elmer Rice *Close Harmony.* She wrote several memorable pieces for the *New Yorker* and has won the O. Henry Short Story Award.

Hollywood, the Land I Won't Return To

I should have written my speech out to be a little more coherent, but you see what happened. I had a broken wrist. When I go offsides, I want to tell you about it. I have a little dog, a little poodle named Misty, and I was taking her for a walk. Well, she stopped suddenly and I didn't. And so when I was in a great cast, and slings and bandages, and all the appurtenances, a lady who lives in the same building I do came up to me and said, "What happened to you?" I said, "Well, I fell over Misty and broke my wrist." And you know, people say the damndest things. You know what she said? She said, "Ah, poor little Misty." *

I think it is an enormous impudence of me to come here and talk to you today. It *got* me coming down in the cab—the enormity of what I am doing, getting up

* From a talk given in 1953.

here and talking to you people. I thought what in heaven's name am I doing, doing this. Then I had one glorious moment when I thought, I can take just a minute, and I don't have to speak but I was stuck here. That's not nice to say because a long time ago the gentleman who runs the theatre said for me to come down here. Well I thought it just great. I don't know what gets into you as you say that. I suppose it was that in this very room Geraldine Page was discovered. So I said to the gentleman, well, yes, but what shall I talk about. And he said, just talk about things like writing in Hollywood. And so if you will let me, I'd like to talk about Hollywood. You see, I can talk about Hollywood only from the position of a writer there . . . 'cause I was supposed to write for many many years. I wasn't there the whole time. It really was a year on and off, but it seems to me I was there for centuries. Now, I must tell you that the writer goes to Hollywood and just calls himself a writer like those out there. Oh, no, some people leave, and come back, but they write *there*. You can call yourself a writer, which is a great name, you know, but in Hollywood you *can be* a writer. You don't need any talent—the last thing you want is talent. You need two things: you need skill and you need a fine memory so that if you know what they did in that wild picture in 1938 . . . you're in! You also need, I can't do it, but you need a manual process, which is polishing apples.

Well, I first . . . is this boring you? . . . I first went out to Hollywood oh, many many years ago. Soooooo long ago that the movie actresses looked flat-chested. When I went out there I found they were doing very curious things. I went out there the way everybody

goes out there, with sheets of paper folded. You know . . . I went out. It was a time so long ago they were having what is called "theme songs." They did a picture called . . . *"I came after to write a theme song."* They told me there had been a picture called "Woman Disputed" and that the theme song was "Woman Disputed, I Love You." But I came out to work on a picture called "Dynamite" and you can't very well say "Dynamite, I Love You." So anyway I thought, I was young and prudent, I might go into the producer and see what the picture was about. The producer was Mr. Cecil DeMille. So I got in, well, it was like riding a camel through the eye of a needle. But I finally did get in and I said, "Just tell me what this picture's about." Well, it was so long and so involved I couldn't possibly remember it to tell you. I do know one thing, that the hero had been accused and convicted of murder—of course, unjustly. He was in the death cell, you see, but luckily had his guitar with him. So I was asked to write the song he would sing.

I got a little nervous while Mr. DeMille was telling me all these things and I went back to my office. First, I had said, "Mr. DeMille, the details of these pictures must be . . . my goodness, it's just staggering." He said, "Ah, yes, zebras in the King of Kings." So I went back to my office and I got a Bible and I felt what in heaven's name are zebras doing in that picture about the life of Christ. I thought maybe he said "Hebrews?" I couldn't stand it and you can understand why.

Later when I ran into him I asked, "What are you doing with zebras?" He said, "Oh, the zebras. They were pulling the chariots of the Magdalene." He said, "Terrible, they kick so easily but their legs broke."

You know, well, that was pretty fancy. I should have known this.

Again, I went back to my office. Oh, I had a wonderful office. If you don't mind as big as this room. I had a great desk. You know those desks that have a great long drawer in them—deep. It was lovely. It was a lovely office but the air was oppressive, and even though I opened the windows and opened the doors, it was still depressing. It turned out that the gentleman who had it before me got a little upset and wanted to have a . . . you know, a place. Well he wanted a little escape. He was raising mushrooms. And he was raising mushrooms by a correspondence system, a system that raised them anywhere. So they had to be in liquid manure. Again, the first time I was there, if you don't mind my saying, there used to be a system, now I don't know if it still exists—they would get a title for a picture and somebody would say, no, it's not too good. And they would send around a slip to the people working, "See if you can get a better title. You'll get $50 for it." And they would send you a tracing of the picture. Well, when I was there, they were doing a picture with Greta Garbo. It was called "Heat." Some master-mind said "You can't have a marquee with designs on 'Heat'." So they sent it around to these writers to get this title and they had to send, as I told you, a tracing of what the picture was about. Well, I don't know what it was about. It was a desert, I think in Africa. Oh, boy, it was a hot desert! She and Mr. Gilbert, it was that long ago, on the desert, and they were on their hands and knees . . . by then five days, no water. Well, Mr. Gilbert then had a flask hung around him on a strap and she thought it was full of

water. Well, poor soul, it was full of spirits. And so the plot was that Garbo pulled herself up through the sand to him and said she would give herself to him if he would give her a drink of water. Now I don't know about you gentlemen, but I should think a man five days in the desert without water, that's the last thing he would want. In any event, the picture was called "Black Oakie."

No, I know . . . but you know, it isn't much better nowadays. I have just heard lately they are doing, at one great studio, a picture of Huckleberry Finn. They are doing it as a musical. Well, maybe it makes music. I don't know. But you see what happens there . . . they can't let anything alone, and they have to fix up Huckleberry Finn. They have to do it! So that voyage down the river, and the raft. Do you think they could leave one of the greatest characters in American literature on it? No. There was a little blond girl with no brassiere. Now you think things are better than they used to be? I heard, oh a very short time ago, they bought a book. I can't tell you the name of the book because I don't know. It was one of those books about convicts and Devil's Island, and there were five of them and they cut down a tree and hollowed it out, and made a canoe of it. And in the night, five got away. As the day dawned there was a sixth. He was tall and lean and dressed in white and there was a glory around his head. And the five convicts got out and escaped in the canoe, and in the morning there were six . . . but it was Joan Crawford. Oh the hell! I don't think we are getting any better.

Now I want to talk, I can talk about it say, from a writer's standpoint. The actors . . . it seems to me

they have an awfully good time. They keep giving one another prizes and they have all this. The writers I think have a fairly tough time, except I didn't. They go out there as I told you. They don't need any talent. They used to. I don't know . . . things are different. You used to get an awful lot of money. Ladies and gentlemen, there was one time I was so rich I thought that detective stories were wonderful. I think things are different now. Nonetheless, they think they will go out there and they will get this much money, then they will come back east, south or wherever they live, and write that great play about the coal miners. They don't . . . something happens. Nothing comes out of that place. I think, I'm really fairly sure in saying, nothing does. Surely, some people who are really poor writers go out. They're sent for to do a certain thing. They do it. They get out. They go there day after day in groups. I tell you, nobody can do anything alone. You are given a script that eight people have written from a novel four people have written. You then, they say, write dialogue. What a curious word. Well you know you can't dialogue without changing scenes. While you are doing it, eight people back of you are writing beyond you. Nobody is allowed to do anything alone. I think that's most of the trouble with the movies. I don't know what to say. It was just like that. I don't do it any more. I used to get money as I told you. It isn't real money. It isn't. I think it's made of compressed snow. It just melts in your hands. They go out there and they go to get it, and they . . . I suppose that you give a great deal in exchange for it. You get the money. Give each other fame, but I earnestly believe that if a screen writer had his name across the Capital Theatre in red,

white and blue letters fifty feet tall, he'd still be anonymous. But they say, you see there's something about that money, even though it is money, you get a little more, and you get a little more. You see, when you're broke, you're broke, but you get a little money then you want a little more money, and more, and so on. Now I think that nothing comes out of Hollywood. People have been there and back. People who started either here or in the south or wherever. But has anything come out of that? There is only one word in Hollywood. It has *enormous* popularity, and that word is "another." Let's do another. Let's do another . . . you know? There are too many people involved!

Oh, I forgot to tell you, everybody writes. Everybody writes. I was watching a producer who shall be nameless . . . it's David Selznick. But anyway, he would come in bashfully, never got in till 6 o'clock in the afternoon and the poor people had to stay on working. And he would say, "No, not this." So you change it and the world was made for you and I. No, I just think that you can't do it. You can't write out there, unless they send you some place else and then you've made your name some place else. I would start this little fashion by saying, If I hear one say one good word about Hollywood, I hope you'll all do me the courtesy to get up and go home but you know, I find that I can't. Because a place besides Hollywood, or a place beside anything . . . there must be some people who are brave, gentle, courageous and intelligent, and they are in Hollywood, but oh my God, they are a minority group. I don't know, I think the great great trouble is the terrible fear. And I don't mean that just politically. They were scared before. When you say

"do another" that means fear, doesn't it? Now there they are and look what comes out of it. Well look what once came out of it . . . a man who made that place a name in history. A man who made that place a glory, spread that glory around the world. So they kicked out Charlie Chaplin. I don't know if you have the misfortune to read the Hollywood columnists, but I do. What they say about him is so much bunk. They say that he made a great deal of money in America. Well, he's earned a great deal of money in America. Possibly his pictures made money that was almost proportionate to the pleasure they gave. They say America gave him money . . . oh, they didn't give him money. He worked for years and years and years. He employed people loyally and generously. So they say he's been given money and a letter with parsley around it. Oh that's the kind of thing they do . . . they throw out the only good person they can.

Now I cannot get up here and say they won't do a good picture. Oh, they have once or twice. I say they can. So maybe they can again. You know, *The Informer* was a pretty good picture. Do you think they could do that now . . . in that sunshine and amid the plaintive cooing of stool pigeons? *The Informer* would now be given a silver loving cup, and a life membership in the American Legion or the D.A.R. I don't know. I think they can do it. I don't know why they won't do it. It's again . . . I think the trouble is too many people, not letting one person do something, and that terrible word "another." I don't know. The musicals . . . have you followed the musicals? I can only quote Marc Connolly who said he had an idea that would revolutionize, you should pardon the expres-

sion, musical comedies on the screen. This was his plot . . . the understudy takes sick and the leading lady plays the part. They haven't done it yet.

Do you know that a few years ago, at my age . . . ouch! . . . I was called in to work on something . . . The life of Eva Tanguay called "The-I-Don't-Care-Girl." Now how would you feel about that? I was fired but I meant to be. It seems that Miss Tanguay . . . well, she liked a colored gentleman, but the man who was producing it said, well, that don't look so good in technicolor. I don't know. I don't know, things may be different in Hollywood. I don't think . . . I think they're worse. I didn't get there in time . . . when it was the Klondike, you know? When there wasn't a party that was any good unless there were two dead bodies on the lawn. They are all getting genteel, and now God help us, all their coaches. Everybody buys paintings. They don't buy a painting the way you buy a painting, something you love to see, that you want to look at. They want to know how cheap you can get it. I heard one writer, five years ago living in an inverted herring barrel, say to his agent, "Hey, if you can, pick up another Braque as cheap as you got one for Joe."

So, that's what they do now—they buy paintings! I don't know, the culture part is *awfully* tough to take. Again, I say there is a minority group, the gentle, intelligent erudite group, but they . . . well, they are naturally pushed out.

But I have never in all the years I was there, I never saw anybody who had read a book published before 1920. I talked one night to a very great, very rich man.

It was the time *The Naked and The Dead* had come out.

I said, "Did you read it?" And he said, "Yeah, read last night after dinner. I went to bed about 10 o'clock." I said, "Do you mean you read that book then?" He said, "Well I started from the back and just looked through it." And that's the way they read. What do they do for entertainment? It's all money! They go out to play golf, but anyhow they don't come back and say, I did pretty well . . . it was a nice day . . . good to be out. None of that nonsense! "Well, I lost $50 on the fifth and on the 6th tee I got back $27." You see? And that's all you ever hear . . . is money. And as I told you, that money ain't so good. I don't know. I tell you I think they could do something. They're not doing it. There is a stench of fear over that place that is like the smell of a Black Plague. What they are afraid of? I don't know. It may be the 3-dimensional pictures. I haven't seen them . . . I haven't caught up with the radio yet but I don't particularly want to. I'm told facts fly out at you. The writers are out of work. They can't get anybody. Well, the infallible Sam Goldwyn said, "How can I do decent pictures when the good writers are gone to jail'" He quickly added, "Don't misunderstand . . . I think they ought to be hung." Mr. Goldwyn too has been caught up in this thing of buying pictures. He had a set of beautiful Lautrecs.

I don't know what more to say about Hollywood. I just say it is a Stagnation. It is a Horror. The palm trees have been brought in, the poor dears, they died on their feet. Brilliant flowers smell like old dollar bills. Those enormous vegetables taste as if they had been grown in old trunks. That way of having no sea-

sons . . . it's just terrible, you can't have any dates. They haven't Easter. Except at Christmas your agent sends you a blotter. I don't know. It's much worse than that now. When I was there—it was pretty bad then. I can only give to you, this message—anybody who *isn't* living in Hollywood is having a good life!

LEE RICHARD HAYMAN was born in 1922 in Indiana. His poetry has appeared in *American Mercury, Saturday Review, Antioch Review, Arizona Quarterly*. He is living in Mexico City at present.

Feared and the Fearful

In blaze of later afternoon sun
a tradition of trumpets makes music,
heralding the pageantry of death
as bull and man charge,
sacrifice to common enemy
eager above in shadowing stands.

The duel is fought . . .
rushing instinct bestially
toro is power of shoulders, mean horns
and slavering hate, grows threat
against the foe, posturing in suit-of-lights
catching the sun in gilded glints,
matador . . . olé . . . olé . . . matador,
momentary god in motion, quick, fluid,
constructing mastery and earning awe,
hate his partner, charging, brushing, crimson cape,
seeking victim, finding flesh and thrust of steel,
est oque . . . curved, snuffing . . . final play.

Spent bull is dead,
life-blood of graceful, feared and fearful man
cools on the heated sand . . .
augmented by an ear, a tail or hoof
the ancient pageantry dreams on
feeding its insatiable olé-ing beast
balleting history of a sort . . .

And only death is victor.

ROBERT M. HUTCHINS, born in 1899, was president of the University of Chicago from 1925 to 1945, and chancellor from 1945 to 1951. He has worked in pedagogy all his life, and is one of the foremost exponents of advanced education. *No Friendly Voice, The Higher Learning in America, Religion and Higher Education* are several of his important books. He is president of the Fund for the Republic and lives in California.

Education: Has It a Future?

The American educational system is one of the most impressive phenomena in the world. The sheer dimensions of the enterprise are such as to unnerve anybody who tries to understand or even to describe it. There are now thirty-seven million pupils enrolled. Ninety-nine percent of the children between the ages of seven and thirteen are in school. About seventy-five per cent of those of high school age are in high school. Almost three million young people are attending colleges and universities. If we had the same number of college students in proportion to the population that England has, we would have about four-hundred thousand of them instead of almost six times that many. In the last

generation the length of the young American's school attendance has been prolonged by four full years. During the time it took the population to increase by forty-five per cent, enrollment in colleges and universities multiplied ninefold.*

All this began with the Puritans of New England more than three hundred years ago. The tenets of their faith required an educated ministry, preaching to congregations that could read. To meet the first requirement they founded Harvard College; the second they dealt with through universal education.

As the theocracy lost its hold and was superseded by democracy, the religious motive behind public education was replaced by a political one. Between the Revolution and the Civil War, the period in which the State universities were founded and universal, free, compulsory education spread throughout the country, the national conviction was that democracy could survive only if the citizens were enlightened through the common schools and leaders were supplied by centers of higher learning.

The passage of the first Morrill Act in 1862 was a symptom of a great change. This Act granted the States 30,000 acres of Federal land for each congressional seat to which a State was entitled for the foundation of colleges where, in the words of the Act, "the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies . . . to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts . . . in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life." Half the States

* Presented over NBC, December 1953.

added the new college to the State university, thus introducing subjects and purposes into these institutions that had never before been associated with universities in the history of the world.

The Morrill Act reflected the growing belief, which dominated American education from the Civil War until about 1925, that the object of education was economic. It was to make the country and its people prosperous. It was now the first duty of every American to take a hand in opening the lands of the West or in building the new industries that were coming to be the principal interest of the country. In the process he was, of course, expected to make himself economically independent. The aim of education was to teach him how to perform these duties.

It might have been argued that the way to make the individual prosperous was to help him learn to think. It might even have been suggested that this was the way to make the country prosperous. But this idea was far too fancy for the times. What came to be demanded in the universities, colleges, junior colleges, and high schools was specific training in specific occupations, in order that the pupil might hope—so the theory ran—to step from the educational system into the job without ever noticing the difference.

The economic motive is still strong. The best evidence is the program elected by veterans under the G. I. Bill of Rights. This bill required the largest educational expenditures in the history of the race. Up to July 31 of this year almost eight million men and women had availed themselves of the benefits of the Act. One-and-a-half million went through what are called "job training establishments." About three

quarters of a million took farm training. More than two and a half million enrolled in craft, trade, and industrial courses. Training for every conceivable occupation, including dancing, beauty culture, barbering, dress-making, embalming, meat processing, chiropody, and signpainting, appears in the reports of the Veterans' Administration. Only six percent of the total number of veterans enrolled in anything that the Veterans' Administration could call the humanities. That was about the same proportion that sought training in the schools as carpenters, bricklayers, and plumbers.

The economic motive strengthens the conviction that education is for everybody and that if some education is good for everybody more is better. In a country that believes in equality of economic opportunity it is impossible to deny to everybody whatever education is thought necessary to economic success. Every year more and more occupations seek to raise their standards, enchance their prestige, and restrict competition through educational requirements. But in a country that believes in equality of economic opportunity this simply means that more and more people must be admitted to the educational programs preparatory to these occupations. If the time ever comes at which it is necessary to have a college degree in order to get a job—and it sometimes looks as though this day were not far distant—then everybody in this country will receive a college degree.

At first glance it seems strange that the United States should be that country in the world in which the economic motive has played the dominant role in education. In the United States specific training to earn a living seems to be irrelevant to economic success. At least we

know that many of our fellow-citizens who have made a great deal of money have never had any training of this kind, or, indeed, of any kind. Moreover, the United States is that country in which mechanization is most highly developed. The object of the machine is not merely to reduce labor, but also to simplify the operation so that a minimum of training and skill is needed. There is, therefore, very little to teach an industrial worker. Still worse, America is that country in which change of every kind takes place at a faster rate than anywhere else. If an educational system is to prepare a boy or girl to work at a given trade in a given environment, it must be fairly clear that the trade and the environment are going to be substantially the same when the student is ready to go to work as they were when he was preparing to do so. In the United States the machines on which a pupil is trained may have been drastically changed by the time he comes to use one. Or the trade for which he has been trained may have been swept away.

The United States is a country in motion. From 1940 to 1947 more than fifteen million people moved from one State to another. In one year, from March 1949 to March 1950, eight and a half million people moved from one county to another. In the decade from 1940 to 1950 the population of the West increased by forty-one per cent. Over a million children between the ages of seven and thirteen change schools every year. As is well known, the rapidity with which Americans change jobs is even more sensational than that with which they change homes.

The object of industrialization and mechanization is to increase the leisure of the population and the sup-

ply of material goods at its command. Even if we assumed, as I think we cannot, that the kind of vocational education we have had in the United States could contribute to these ends, it is clear that this kind of education loses its point when these ends have been achieved. Now we do not know what to do with the leisure we have obtained or with the goods we have produced. Training a man to work on a machine does not help him to understand what to do when he is not working. Training for production does not help us to discover how to distribute equitably the surpluses we have on hand.

These things are perfectly clear to everybody. There is nothing new in anything I have said. Consequently the economic motive for mass education in this country, though it is still strong, has been somewhat weakened of late. I think it is being supplanted by a different attitude, and that is that education does not have to have a purpose. Since a practical activity like education can be measured only in terms of its purpose, it follows that there can be no standards in education. There is therefore no difference between good and bad education.

The argument runs this way. We first say that everybody ought to be educated, and the more education everybody has the better everything will be. We then say that whatever goes on in an institution called educational is education. As the Duke of Wellington remarked, there is nothing like a good, clear definition. With this definition we are able to equate education with schooling and to say that everybody ought to go to school, and the longer he stays there the better everything will be. What he does there is not of much

importance. We do not want him around the house and we do not want him to go to work. In this way the educational system becomes a custodial system, or a place of accommodation. The standards that can be applied to a place of accommodation are illustrated by the questions one asks at a resort hotel. What is the price? Are the rooms neat and clean? Is the service prompt? Is the food good? Will I meet nice people? What are the opportunities for recreation? What is the view? As might be expected, these are the questions that the catalogues and brochures of American colleges and universities set out first of all to answer.

Or consider the dramatic efforts of the Co-ordinator of Secondary Education in one of the great cities of the West to keep pupils in high school. He has instituted courses dealing with floriculture, restaurant work, driver training, family living, meeting people, and personal economics. He is committed to the idea that the educational system is a place of accommodation with vocational overtones. And he is not alone.

It may be said, and with some justice, that if we have failed to figure out a purpose for education it is because we have been too busy expanding it. Though this qualification is just, it is not comforting for there is no evidence that the expansion of our educational system is at an end; and if expansion and the definition of purpose are mutually exclusive, we shall not be able to get around to purpose for a great many years, if ever. The birth rate has risen from 18.4 per thousand in 1933 to 25.1 per thousand in 1952. This means that one and a half million more children were born in 1952 than in 1933. The effects of the rising birth-rate are already being felt in the schools. It is estimated that

they lack 345,000 classrooms and 72,000 teachers. If we consider only those children already born and do not indulge in speculation about the future of the birth-rate, we see that the high schools and the colleges and universities are in for a bad time. By 1970, if the present rate of enrollment in higher institutions is maintained, the number of college and university students will be roughly twice what it is today. It follows, of course, that unless there is some change in the present ratio of students to teachers, the teaching staff will have to be twice its present size.

Let us look at some of the consequences of regarding the educational system as a place of accommodation. If you are going to run such a place, you might as well do it with the lowest paid help you can get. This is what we are doing: we are paying teachers an average salary of $3400 a year. The reason the average is so high is that some states, like New York and California, pay salaries that are out of line. In Arkansas, for example, more than half the teachers get less than $1900 a year. Although we are already short 72,000 teachers, every year 60,000 of those we have leave the profession.

In the second place, if you are managing a place of accommodation, you will want to make sure that no new, different, or disturbing ideas reach the young people who are being accommodated. Whatever the dominant pressure group in the community wants them exposed to should of course be arranged, but only this and nothing more. We are now following this prescription. The excitement about UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), in Houston, Pawtucket, and Los An-

geles; the censorship of textbooks and library books in Texas and Vermont and the agitation leading to the establishment of the Textbook Commission in New York; the rash of loyalty oaths for teachers all over the country—these things are the kind of absurdities that might be expected in a place of accommodation. The low point came in the demand of an Indiana textbook commissioner that Robin Hood and all books referring to Quakers be removed from the schools because both Robin Hood and the Quakers follow the Communist Party line. Or perhaps an even lower point was reached in the reference of a Senator of the United States to our oldest university as a "sanctuary for communists and a smelly mess." What the Senator was objecting to, by the way, was that Harvard had failed to fire a professor who had availed himself of rights guaranteed him by the Constitution the Senator had sworn to defend.

If what we want is a custodial system or a place of accommodation there can be little objection to this kind of thing. Such a system or such a place would naturally indoctrinate the youth in the tribal slogans and folkways as interpreted by the most vocal group in the community at the time.

But if we want an educational system we shall have to insist on something far different. The aim of education appears to be understanding, to know the reasons for things. The difference between training and education is intellectual; the person who is trained to the habitual performance of certain operations need not understand the reasons for those operations or their consequences. To put it another way, education is the process of learning to lead the good life. The perma-

nence of the good habits that are formed by good acts, that induce further good acts, and so constitute a good life, is guaranteed by an intellectual grasp of the aims of life and of the means of achieving them.

So Aristotle said that it is impossible to be good without being wise. He also said that it is impossible to be wise without being good. Thus goodness and wisdom go hand in hand. But though other social institutions, like the family and the church, must, as Cardinal Newman and John Stuart Mill suggested, bear the primary responsibility for the formation of good habits, we must look to education to supply the understanding and knowledge necessary to sustain them. We must also look to education to provide the opportunity for the maximum development of the intellectual powers of the people; for no other social institution can perform this service to society.

A democracy must make the effort to see to it that every citizen is as good and wise as possible and that he achieves the fullest development of his intellectual powers. As Mill remarked, the prime object of government should be the virtue and intelligence of the people. In a democracy this must mean all the people.

A system dedicated to these aims would be an educational system. Since it would be intelligible, it would be defensible. Academic freedom, which is now generally regarded as a device by which wrong-headed people hang on to their jobs, would be seen as a means of guaranteeing an alert and progressive population. Discussion and controversy, which are coming to be looked upon as subversive, would appear as indispensable to the functioning of democratic government. Intellectual activity, which has often been thought

frivolous and dangerous, would be respected as the essential ingredient of the wisdom that the country acutely needs.

Korea and the atomic bomb should give us that sense of need. We have been prosperous, powerful, and isolated so long that we have not been concerned by waste nor alarmed by ignorance or ineptitude. We have not even worried much about demagogues and the large followings they have been able to muster. We have taken these things in our stride, for we have always been able to afford them. So we have poured billions into the erection of countless schools, colleges, and universities without bothering about what was to go on inside them. We did not take education seriously. We could see no reason why we should.

Now, however, we confront new problems, the solution of which is a matter of life and death, not merely to us but to civilization. Nothing is more striking than the absence of any connection between our problems and our educational program. The most urgent issues before us are how to make peace and how to make democracy work. We must find answers before it is too late. A system of accommodation cannot help us find them. For this we need wisdom. The aim of education is wisdom.

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Do National Characteristics in Literature Exist?

The existence of national characteristics in literature is generally held as an obvious fact that needs no proof. Reference is made to the influence of tradition, the mold of school, the stamp of language, the fascination of the earth, but the upholders of national characteristics become extremely evasive the moment the question arises of stating exactly what concrete concordances these ties establish between the various works produced in the same nation. Yet nothing should arouse our suspicions more than a general statement which is not accompanied by examples which may be checked.

The London Institute of Psychology understood this, and during the last war sought, through objective tests, to ascertain whether national characteristics could be discovered in the field of humor. This con-

scientious Institute made a special printing of a few hundred witticisms by English, French and German authors (all translated into good English and stripped of all visible trace of national origin), and submitted them to the judgment of several thousand wounded men from all walks of life who were under treatment in various hospitals. After the patients had either burst out laughing, smiled or just yawned, they were asked to guess the nationality of these humorists. Most of our worthy and patriotic Englishmen attributed without hesitation all the excellent examples to British humor, all the risqués jokes to French spirit, and all the coarse stories to German authors. Even with those subtle persons who strove to use more substantial criteria, eighty per cent of the replies were wrong. Thus, in the long run, we must admit that awkwardness as well as artfulness are qualities which are most equally shared the world over. The greatest blow to the theory of national characteristics was found in the fact that German prisoners were unable to discern Jewish jokes from Aryan jokes.

Once again, intuition found itself contradicted by experience. The field of humor, which is considered by popular common sense as the most characteristic of the national genius of each people, proves rather to be characteristic of the individual genius of each humorist.

The question may be asked whether the test made by the London Institute of Psychology could be applied to literary works. This would be quite difficult, for while the "tasters" who are called on to discover the national origin may correctly judge an anecdote on several lines, they can only obtain the real flavor of a

literary work after prolonged reading. And this gives them a greater chance to identify the author, the more so as men of letters are better known than humorists.

Another way of settling the question would be to apply the sensible precepts of Descartes advising the avoidance of bias and "the carrying out of such complete enumerations and such general surveys that we might be certain nothing was omitted." Consequently, we must first read a good many books of different literary types from the various centuries of a given country, then we must look for the characteristics common to all of them and, if we find any such common characteristics, we must do the same for the works of other countries in order to check whether the pecularities of a national group vary from one group to another. In this way, we should analyse Spanish literature under its Castillian, Mexican, Argentinian, Chilian, Uruguayan, Paraguayan, etc., forms. Then we should disentangle in each the common traits of its dramatic or comic writers, poets, novelists, essayists, or story-tellers, etc., and be certain that the national characteristics thus found in one body of literature, say the Nicaraguayan, can not be found in Hondurian, Peruvian, or Equatorian, etc., works.

Until such rigorous methods are applied to literary research, we can test the belief of those who argue for the existence of national characteristics in literature. We have only to ask these persons to be concrete, to state specifically one of these supposed characteristics and the mind is immediately beset by memories of a host of works produced by the same nation and which do not present this characteristic.

For example, it is in France, in the country of the

clear Latin genius that the obscure poetry of Gerard de Nerval, Petrus, Borel, Rimbaud, Apollinaire, and Breton flourished. It is in this country of elegant concision that the most grandiloquent poet of the world, Victor Hugo, came into full blossom. It is in the nation praised so highly for its sense of proportion that Rabelais, Chauvin, the Marquis de Sade, Lautreamont, Celine, Sartre shocked the public. Heavy Germany produced the delicate Opitz, the graceful Hoffmanswaldau, the elegant Gunther, the refined Heine. Reserved and puritan England gave birth to the fiery Marlowe, the passionate Tourneur, the mystical Blake, the profuse Coleridge, the exuberant Lord Byron, and the scandalous Oscar Wilde.

As we can only speak of an "individual characteristic" insofar as this characteristic holds good in the course of the life of the individual, so we can only speak of a "national characteristic" insofar as we continue to find it in the course of the centuries which make up the life of the nation. If national characteristics are to have any validity, then the so-called typical traits of a body of literature should remain unaffected by the revolutions of fashion and the blows of time so that they may be recognized across the tribulations and the ages.

But what one takes generally for "characteristics," that is, essential and permanent attributes, are often only the colors given to literary works by international currents which arise from different patterns of circumstances and which disappear as soon as the public is saturated. Thus the courtly poetry of Chrestien de Troyes had its proselytes in Germany (the Minnesanger), in England (Chaucer), and in Spain (Lopez de

Mundoza); as a reaction, it gave birth all over Europe to the bourgeois literature which poked fun at the exaggerations of chivalrous love and the feudal conceptions of honor, (Rutebeuf in France, Henry de Messen in Germany, Luigi Pulci in Italy, Cervantes in Spain.) In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was French classicism which set the fashion (the period of Dryden in England, Gunther and Wieland in Germany, Soumarokov and Krylov in Russia; the Italians and Spanish were writing in French.) But in all of these countries, the following century, romanticism reacted against the "narrow" taste of the preceding ages.

It could be pled that each nation is receptive to these various currents in its own particular way. But, if it is true that the French romanticism of Hugo does not present the peculiarities of the German romanticism of Novalis or the English romanticism of Shelley, neither does it present the peculiarities of the equally French romanticism of Vigny and Lamartine. For it is not the nation as an entity which reacts specifically to different literary currents, but the individuals, and it is because the whole country is arbitrarily identified with a very small number of its writers that characteristics are taken for national when they are really individual.

Inadvertently, the mind often sets as the implicit point of departure, in its proofs, the very result it had to arrive at. If we want to establish that literature possesses national characteristics, we choose dissimilar authors which we begin by decreeing "characteristic" of various nations, then, underlining the contrasts for which these authors have been chosen, we conclude

victoriously—here you have the result of being born on different sides of frontiers. Yet when we compare the writers of the same nationality and note differences which are just as obvious between them, we attribute these differences to the infinite variations of temperament, education, associates, sentimental adventures, sicknesses and vices, and the common nation which should have leveled off all this is completely forgotten. The work of Baudelaire is explained psychoanalytically by his Oedipus complex, psycho-biologically by his depraved loves, "existentially" by his refusal to give in to liberty, literarily by his desire to combine the romantic feeling with Parnassian perfection; but his works are never interpreted as a result of his French citizenship. It is only when Baudelaire is compared to foreign authors that immediately psychological, philosophical, family, and social interpretations vanish in the face of the transcendent pre-eminence of the passport.

Certainly, we cannot question the fact that literary works can be influenced by the milieu in which the writer lives, but this milieu is not necessarily bound by a national frame. Julian Benda, in his article in the *French Encyclopedia,* does not mention the nation at all among the factors of cultural atmosphere which condition the works of the mind. According to him these factors are the *form* (rules such as the three unities), the *presentation* (the invention of the printing press), the *ideological systems,* etc. It is obvious that all these arise from international trends.

The only factor in the list set up by Benda, which we might at first glance qualify as national, is *language.* It has often been said that Latin writers strug-

gled against a language which was unfit for abstract thought and that Greek was more suited to express ideas than moods. But this is denied by Paul van Tieghen who defines the Greco-Latin literature as "being one for two peoples and in two languages." Moreover, this mold that language is supposed to impose on the expression of thoughts should loosen, and in fact, does loosen as a result of the continual exchanges which take place among all languages. And what is more, we cannot even consider that this mold applies on the national scale since each great language of Culture is used by numerous countries: French in France, in the southeast part of Belgium, in French-speaking Switzerland, in Libya, in Canada, etc; English in Great Britain, Ireland, the United States, Australia, Canada, India, etc.; German in Germany, Austria, German-speaking Switzerland, etc.

Other factors which result from the milieu, such as the institutions and customs, equally exercise an influence on literature, yet neither do they let themselves be grouped into a sheaf which is tied together by the frontiers of a country. Institutions are often alike in the same period in many countries. Contrarily, they change in the course of life of the same nation, bringing along changes in the influence they hold over literature and this, of course, runs counter to the stability which we have recognized as necessary for all deep-lying characteristics. In many cases, moreover, it is the social framework of a foreign nation which influences its writers: Stendhal was fascinated by the Italian Renaissance, Mérimée by the Spanish gypsys; the classicists took their inspiration from antiquity, the romanticists from the Scandinavian countries and the

Orient. One may retort that with these writers who go to find their subjects in the distant past or in far-away countries, the contemporary atmosphere slips beneath their pens unconsciously. But if it is quite true that the Greco-Latin princes of Racine speak like the grand seigneurs of the court of Versailles, the latter speak far more like the characters of Euripides than the nine-tenths of the national contemporaries of Racine. In fact, and this is something that everyone admits, mental attitudes, feelings and opinions differ much more from social category to social category than they differ in the same category from country to country. The intellectuals the whole world over are much more alike than an intellectual is like his shopkeeper or peasant compatriot.

Finally, the influence of the social framework is so complex that here one often makes mistakes. For example, the provincial traits of present-day German literature are attributed to the manifold divisions of this country. Yet when this country was at the height of its decentralization, it was the smallest principality, that of Weimar, which produced its most universal poet, Goethe. And, on the contrary, when Germany became a large centralized empire, the spirit of "provincialism" which exasperated Nietzsche spread out among the men of letters.

Thus we come to a more subtle yet basic view of the influences that the milieu has over literature. It is not a question of denying these influences, but of recognizing that they are so manifold and so ambivalent that it is impossible to give them any common *national* denominator. The heat of the sun, the height of the hills, the flavor of the fruits, the songs of the roads, the

tales of the nursery, the invention of the railroads, the nostalgia of an aristocracy, or the hopes of a revolution, all these undoubtedly condition literary production, but resolve into an ever moving complex of circumstantial, transitory, international, and local phenomena which tend more to differentiate than to unify the literary characteristics within the same nation.

To sum up and to use the language of mathematics, we may say that national characteristics are negligible quantities—infinitesimals—compared with geographical and secular characteristics. The literary factor is much more dependent on the soil than on the nation, and still more on time than on space. And above all, these factors have little importance in comparison to the individual peculiarities whose sovereign influence dominates all literary creation.

The idea that a work of art is fatally marked by its national origin often expresses a desire more than a statement of fact: the desire to melt art into that ingot of prejudice, egotisms, and mysticisms out of which nationalism forges its armor. Above all, the nationalist wants to debase the mind by denying its independence and thereby its liberty. He wants to place those who create under the domination of obscure and immanent forces which are supposed to spring from the depths of the earth to fashion their works. The nation wants to be God vis-à-vis its creatures. It wants to be able to say to the most independent among them, to the writer: "Without my blood and breath, you are nothing." The "Volkische Beobachter" of May 21, 1931, always in the avant garde of frankness when it comes to persecuting thought, clearly expresses this when it says: "There must no longer be a single artist who

does not create out of the nation and with the nation in mind."

This attempt to enslave the mind explains why authors were so often consecrated national writers by nationalist movements which needed literary prestige. Not until the 19th Century, when Italy had achieved national unity, was Dante proclaimed a specifically Italian national genius. Before this time, he was considered as a mere genius, inspired by ancient humanism and medieval mysticism, inferior to Petrarch; he was almost entirely ignored in the 17th and 18th Centuries. During his lifetime, the "fatherland" not only failed to recognize itself in him, but even persecuted him. Banished from Florence, condemned to be burnt at the stake in Rome, Dante composed his own epitaph: "Here I rest, I, Dante, the outlaw, born of Florence, mother without love." Because Goethe refused to associate himself with the lyrico-nationalist movement of his anti-Napoleonic colleagues, he was detested by his fellow countrymen who only crowned him with the German colors when they became aware of the prestige which the poet enjoyed in foreign lands. In other cases, a genius is proclaimed "national" only through reaction to a public craze for foreign authors. It is in this way that Shakespeare was lifted to the rank of a national idol in England in order to counterattack the taste of the public for French works.

One would think that so many efforts to endow literature with national characteristics would end by being successful; but experience has proved that decrees are powerless to shape literature. As soon as Dr. Goebbels decreed: "German art of the future decades will be heroic, of a steel-like romanticism, stripped of

sentimentality, national with pathos," German art disappeared. As soon as Dr. Averbach, of the GPU Literary Section, announced the six commandments: "Proletarian art rejects individualism, Proletarian art must be an arm of the class, etc.," Soviet art disappeared. Each time that the State has wanted to give a national uniform to the works of the mind, it has killed these works. For by the very act of submitting, art changes its nature. By abandoning its independence and its spontaneity which are the essentials of its magic, it becomes as distant to its true nature as the body of a mummy to the pretty woman who once inhabited it.

Far from making the specific characteristics flourish, the intentional search for national peculiarity results in the most distressing monotony. Let us take the example, which is so symptomatic, of patriotic literature. In spite of—and doubtlessly because of—its premeditated desire to assume the most typical colors of its soil, patriotic literature loses all personality and ends up by using everywhere the same literary gems, such as: the salt of the earth, the old virtues of the race, the impure blood of the enemy, the glorious banner, etc. Many among those who are shocked if artistic rules are imposed on literature, for instance, that all stories must have a happy end, admit unhesitatingly nationalistic decrees. What the State urges with the greatest insistence upon its writers, and the public accepts with the greatest indulgence is this obligatory impregnation of art and literature with national colors. A rather strange obligation since the so-called national characteristics should not need to be solicited, for they are supposed to arise spontaneously from the depths of the

writer, owing to the simple fact that this writer was born in the very same hundred thousand (or twenty million) square miles as his fellow citizen.

We need but a little reflection in order to understand why national characteristics have so little weight in literature.

The first reason is that the life of man—at least when we contemplate deeply, that is to say, in the way in which it gives rise to great literature—changes little from country to country. This consideration holds true for all culture. If we mean by culture the set of the highest works of thought and art, the great achievements of the most intimate human aspirations, which merge with the most universal desires, it is clear that culture escapes national divisions. This high level of the mind is articulated by themes, concepts, feelings, but not by birth countries. In the face of its ultimate problems, culture knows neither Germany nor France nor Spain nor Russia, but man and woman, the true and the false, the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, confidence and doubt, impotence and desire, pain and pleasure, reality and dream.

If, on the contrary, we mean by culture a sort of "smoother average" of judgments and behavior which are most commonly accepted, then we could perhaps be able to find some common traits in the ordinary bearers of this culture in one nation, but then these traits would not apply to the true creators. "That an artist is the representative of the society of his time is above all true of second-rate artists," Faguet remarked. Likewise an artist cannot be first-rate and national since, to be national, he must resemble the vast multi-

tude and, consequently, renounce the quality of originality which distinguishes the creator.

The second reason for the absence of national characteristics in literature lies in the cultural interchanges which take place more rapidly than racial interchanges. If it is already difficult to find racial characteristics among the populations, what would it be to find them in their books! There are no writers worthy of this name who have not read, or who are not inspired by numerous foreign, ancient, or modern models. The Dutchman Erasmus studied in Paris, taught in Oxford, traveled in Italy and died in Switzerland: the influence of Italian writers went as far as giving a poetic language to Spain; Lomonossov, the Malherbe of Russia, was a poet of German culture, etc. Since the search for inspiration is, as all human instincts, universal and non-national, it is all over the world that literary messages of a creative mine awake echos and bring forth new literary trends.

That is why the cultured public has always sought the eternal man in the heroes of works that it prized; that is why lasting success has always crowned authors who showed themselves capable of escaping a particularist perspective in order to reach the universal and the substantial which we are common to all men.

Yes, to all men; for, to the great sorrow of all those who would like to give an exclusive lyrical essence to national unity, the main forms of civilization have become very similar all over the world. Everywhere men praise—even if they do not apply them—the same fundamental moral rules: "You shall not steal, you shall not betray, you shall not kill;" everywhere they gather into families, bury their dead, seek privacy for their

personal pleasures, send their children to school, work in the fields, shops, offices; fear death, cherish love; everywhere they set down their ideas and their passions in books, statues, pictures, vases, fabrics, melodies; everywhere they compute with the same arithmetic, weigh with the same scales, build according to the same geodesy, grasp with the same hands; everywhere they look at their children with the same light in their eyes and the same smile on their lips . . .

. . . and what matter the outline of the eyes or the pattern of the lips! It is the light, it is the smile, which constitute the source, the object and the banner of culture.

JEROME MELLQUIST was born in — and lives in Paris. His books are: *The Emergence of an American Art, Paul Rosenfeld: Voyageur in the Arts, What They Said: Postscript to Art Criticism.* Mr. Mellquist has lectured at New York University, Harvard's Salzburg Seminar, and at conferences in France, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy. He was designated a Commissioner for the 1950 Venice Biennale; and he has written catalogues for many museums and galleries.

Transformers of Taste

Special plaques of merit should be inscribed for the Transformers of Taste. These men have not, like John Ruskin, trumpeted a gleaming new order where the penitent would reject the dross of contemporary life for the Gothic virtues of hammered gold backgrounds, flamboyant arches and quiring angels. Nor have they undertaken, as did the Pre-Raphaelites, to tint more dainty patterns for the effete. Theirs has been a more hearty role. Situated often amidst the very flux of traffic, they would preserve, against all timidity and waywardness, some of the most valiant talents in their time. Never pining for a vanished age, they preferred

rather to build from the stones of their immediate neighborhood—and they have built so well that men still find shelter there. These intermediaries of construction, these esthetic protectors—whether a Durand-Ruel, an Ambroise Vollard, or an Alfred Stieglitz, —nevertheless have not always been rightly applauded, for their effectiveness has not been properly understood.

The first of these esthetic transformers, Paul Durand-Ruel (who was born in 1831) did not, in fact, propose any such mission for his life. Though his parents conducted an art-goods shop in the Rue St.-Jacques (where the medieval presence of Francois Villon still invests its ageless corners), and though such painters as Daumier, Gericault and Delacroix would often come to buy their supplies, still it was thought that he would follow another career. Once, after his parents had shifted their quarters to the Right Bank, where, on the Rue Lafitte, they also started to hold exhibitions, he interrupted his studies so as to help them in the business. Returning then to his studies he thought to enter either the clergy or the military and had actually enrolled at St. Cyr, where he quickly excelled. Becoming dangerously ill at twenty, he withdrew from the French West Point and thereafter devoted himself to the father's affairs. He expanded his knowledge by studying Collections in Hamburg, Belgium and elsewhere on the Continent, while he also did not neglect England. And he would always maintain that his support to the Ecole of 1830 —to that master of storm-shot landscapes Theodore Rousseau, to the peasant-ritualist Millet, to Corot, and to still other painters of that movement—would stand

as his principal legacy to the future. History has ordered it otherwise, and today his name is inseparably united with the school he so indomitably upheld—the French Impressionists.

His first contact with this group occurred in London, where he had fled during the Franco-Prussian War. Exposing a few samples of his older men, he one day was accosted by Monet, presently saw his work, and soon exhibited it. Pissarro also would come to know him during the London exile, and then, upon the war's conclusion, he would likewise see the work of Renoir, Manet, Sisley and Berthe Morisot. Such contacts automatically involved further ones with Degas, Mary Cassatt, and minor contributors to the effort, until at length his gallery had become their center.

Now Durand-Ruel was no professional reformer setting out to overturn accepted values in the picture realm. And yet, while a conservative both in politics and religion, he did not, on the other hand, stumble upon these heretical talents by a felicitous fluke. Somehow he was attuned to their change. If a Manet transposed the electricity snapping in the air of the late 70's, he could respond to its flush of incandescence; Renoir, with his hot and overflowing forms, also found him ready; so did Monet, whether with his railroad sites or his Normandy landings, and the sooty passages of Pissarro required no second thought. He matched them, in short, but in another sense. Where they could articulate the unobjectified thoughts, feelings and sensations of industrialized France after a disastrous War, he, by some instantaneous thrust of the imagination, could communicate their values to a more practical world, and thus enable the artist to live. He might be

regarded, indeed, as the trustworthy *paterfamilias* to the entire group of painters—purchasing their work, supplying them money, visiting them, encouraging, suggesting, and battling forever against prejudice.

Battling, he could, like mythological heroes, devise fresh arms against his adversities. Times shut down upon him in the late 70's, but he recovered. Then, when his most dependable financial backer had failed, in 1884, he was confronted by insolvency. Informing his painters that he might capsize, he received from at least two of them—Renoir and Monet—replies* fascinating by their contrasts. Touched, Renoir wrote in May, 1884, "Whatever help I can now render you may be very small. But if you need me, I beg you to consider me as completely at your disposal. Regardless of what happens, you may count on my absolute devotion." Monet, who possessed a market sagacity rare among artists, did not conceal his dismay at learning that the dealer might be obliged to sell off quickly a large number of paintings. "I have been subjected to a terrible disquiet," he confides, May 15, 1884, "and I wish to be kept informed as to what happens to you whether good or bad. If you can possibly grant me a moment, do write; I am most anxious to know if you can pull yourself out of this situation, and how." Briefly he complains about his health, and continues: "Renoir writes that he has advised you to sell our canvases cheaply. If that will help you to escape this trouble, don't hesitate—we can produce still other pictures; but if not,"—and here his caution predominates—"be extremely careful, as this could do much harm. It

* Cited with permission of Durand-Ruel, Paris.

will be necessary, I fear, for us to sell on our own account, for surely we can't ask you for money if you can't escape this predicament . . . ."

Still later, of course, Monet would sometimes commit his pictures to other merchants, though Renoir never shifted. As for the immediate contingency, what saved the House of Durand-Ruel was a *coup* of the greatest audacity. It seems that through the agency of Mary Cassatt, an opportunity had come up for the Impressionists to be exhibited through the American Art Association in New York. This show, which occurred in April, 1886, led several American critics not only to applaud it, but to uphold its organizer as "The Apostle of Impressionism." Certainly Durand-Ruel who had accompanied the paintings to the States, soon made many converts, and effective ones too, for they bought generously. Even the National Academy, then located in quarters resembling the Palazzo Ducale, near Madison Square, sedately showed the pictures upon its walls. Nor did the intelligentsia scoff, as in the French capital. For once, at least, the Americans proved that they could be as supple esthetically as they were in adjusting themselves to the dangers of pioneer life. Later yet, after difficulties with the customs and American competitors, the visiting French impresario decided to open a New York branch (which was to be maintained until early January, 1950).

Subsequent chapters in the story merely furnish a crescendo upon the same theme. The gallery prospered, collectors yielded, the public also surrendered. An entire generation would have been transformed in its taste. Granted that the artists had furnished the fundamental material, granted too that Durand-Ruel

himself could not always remain flexible towards later men such as Cezanne and Van Gogh, still, his hand did much to shape the taste of the ensuing period.

His triumph was marred by but a single irony. Apparently, the tempests caused by his original assaults against conventionality had not been forgiven by the official mind. At least it was only one year before his death in 1922 that Paul Durand-Ruel was decorated with the *Legion d'Honneur.*

But if Durand-Ruel had overlooked Cezanne, this lapse was speedily corrected. Almost equally effective at modifying taste, though arising a generation later, was Ambroise Vollard. He too did not intend to devote himself to pictures, though soon after coming to France from the Island of Reunion, which is a smaller department than that of the Seine, he was combing the book stalls in Marseilles for both literature and painting. He had set out at first to become a lawyer, in 1889, and he had studied briefly at Montpelier, but then, quitting that profession, he would settle in Paris and it was there, perhaps because of a reduced diet consisting of sea-biscuits, that he understood what he would have to do to master his competitors.

Vollard—and this has been recalled by Mme. William Aspenwall Bradley, whose husband encouraged the dealer to assemble his memoirs—possessed a pair of skipping eyes. He noted how Père Tanguy, an obscure color-merchant, had accumulated a stack of paintings by still-unrecognized men like Cezanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh. And having opened his own modest shop, he eventually arranged, in 1894, to expose a substantial cross-section of Cezanne's work. The public, of course, hooted, and Vollard has maliciously recorded some of

the blind dismissals to which the pantings were subjected. Endowed with an almost caricatural gift of memory, as well as a capacity to select what he wanted, this taste-changer would compile many anecdotes on the stupidities of an era. And he would fortify his ambitions as a writer by publishing his reminiscences on his talks with Degas, Renoir and Cezanne. Possibly it was he who first recalled that Cezzanne, when questioned about the portrait he was doing on this admirer of his work, replied that he had, after ninety revisions, become mildly satisfied with the shirt-front!

A gourmet and a man of almost a feminine fastidiousness in taste, Vollard would invite his particular friends and still other qualified persons to long dinners in his *cavés* upon the Rue Lafitte. It has been claimed that his wines exemplified the same rare selectiveness as his paintings, and that the vintages were equally ripe. He was a prime story-teller too, and it is said that his book *Recollections of a Picture-dealer* derived from the following anecdote. When asked which faith he preferred, Vollard said his first choice would be the Jewish because one's head was always covered in the synagogue. A second choice would be the Protestant faith, since it habitually warmed its churches. As for the Catholics, not only did they relegate the worshippers to a frigid temperature, but the head was exposed to all the draughts pouring down from the high and icy arches. A visitor who had relished this recital urged him to set down his memoirs, and hence, perhaps, the nucleus of a book.

But apart from exhibiting pictures and chiding the stupidities of those who blustered out their accusations against them, the real affection of Vollard was centered

in his book-publishing. He would begin as early as 1895, his first project being *Les Peintres Graveurs,* which included such contemporaries as Renoir, Vuillard, Maurice Denis, Sisely and Odilon Redon. Shortly afterwards, he observed from his perch on the top of a Paris bus that one of his neighbors had wrapped a scarf about his neck so as to conceal the absence of a collar. The same passenger was gripping a large portrait, apparently his own. Unfortunately, it projected so far into the aisle that it impeded the other passengers, until the conductor objected: "Why don't you bring along your wardrobe?" Whereupon his customer replied, "I don't have one." Then, as the man descended, Vollard learned that he was Verlaine and that he had written *Parallelement.* Snapping up this volume at a bookstall, the ambitious publisher decided that he would do it in a de luxe edition. Nevertheless once the book had been printed at the Imprimerie Nationale, he ran up against the authorities, who, though French, could not appreciate a certain frankness in the text. Still later, after Vollard had issued *Daphnis and Chloe,* with drawings by Bonnard, a renowned bibliophile rejected the volume. "Ah, no!" he moaned, "that would be letting the Devil into my library!"

Nevertheless, every such rebuff merely implanted a greater determination into the publisher, and he resolved that he would prevail. When he died in 1939, he had, at any rate, piled up a list astonishing both as to its diversity and excellence. He had done the *Imitation of Christ,* with suitable canticles-in-line by Maurice Denis; he had got Rodin to furnish earthy watercolors to a novel by Octave Mirbeau, the rather gamy naturalist; he persuaded Dufy to add his gayety to *La Belle En-*

fant, by Eugene Montfort, and he had employed Degas' morbid reflections on a bordello as an accompaniment to a *conte* by de Maupassant, *la Maison Tellier.* Again, he had commissioned Chagall to do 100 gouaches for La-Fontaine, thus getting one fabulist to match another, and subsequently would have the Russian artist embellish the *Dead Souls* of Gogol. Even Picasso would be enlisted for a tale of Balzac and he would virtually imprison Rouault while goading him into completing a series of colored lithographs to illustrate a volume of his own as well as still other texts.

Such efforts enabled Vollard to reshape taste both by advancing the art of the Post-Impressionists and by a new possibility in the publishing of well-executed art-books. Perhaps he did not uphold any major contemporary movement with the same steadfastness of Durand-Ruel (the Cubists, after all, having found their principal merchant-connoisseurs in both Kahnweiler and Uhde); but he did impose a new respect for the interregnum dominated by Cezanne, and here, at least, he scored a decisive measure of esthetic change.

Alfred Stieglitz, the last in this triumvirate of taste-modifiers, would say that he had anticipated his time by thirty years, though it could also be said that he had long since outlived his own beginnings. Born at Hoboken, N.J., in 1864, he first steeped himself in the portraits and genre-paintings of a typical Victorian home, and then, sent to Europe for an education, remained there ten years, from 1881 to 1891. Deserting his intended profession of engineer, he turned to photography and soon had surpassed most of his contemporaries. His pictures of Black Forest peasants, Berlin householders, Venetian pumps and Swiss Alps,

secured him many prizes, and he resolved that he would further advance the level of his medium. Returning to the U.S. he associated himself with other photographers, urged more compelling standards of workmanship and undertook the editing of *Camera Notes,* the official magazine of the New York Camera Club.

Too spirited for the more stodgy members of this organization, he withdrew and, along with like-minded rebels, founded Photo-Secession, a rival group devoted more strictly to the ideas of Pictorial Photography (a movement holding that photography, like painting, must submit what could qualify as a *picture,* whether in composition, tonal value, or so-called line, and not rely merely upon its chemical or naturalistic attributes). As an additional support to such a program, he established a quarterly, *Camera Work,* insisting, when it came to reproductions, upon a surpassing quality. Each photogravure, for instance, was manufactured at the Bruckmann Verlag in Munich, and, during a lifetime from 1903 to 1917 (when importation difficulties made its continuance impossible) it showed but three or four typographical errors. Thus Photo-Secession, taken either as a movement in photography or a further departure in magazine-publishing, promulgated a world-standard which other craftsmen are still ready to respect. As for the American wing alone, its work is historic: Clarence White, who memorialized the plaintive shades in Ohio villages; Edward Steichen, whose best portrait gave "headlight" eyes to J. P. Morgan, Sr.; Frank Eugene, who successfully mingled photography with etching, and a miscellany of others.

Stieglitz too, once he had returned to the States, directed his camera against Fifth Avenue coaches, sidewalk peddlers, the tattered folk of the East Side, and then, somewhat later, would produce his democratic classic, *The Steerage*, where the humble immigrants eye the approaching shore as if this would erase all their aches from the homeland. As a result of a long-extended campaign, therefore, Stieglitz had greatly modified photographic methods, as well as getting his associates to do more thinking than they had done before.

Yet he would alter pictorial preoccupations in still another direction by converting himself into a living wedge for the proliferation of Modern Art in America. This implied a certain shift, to be sure, since his attic-galleries at 291 Fifth Avenue had theretofore been exclusively relegated to exhibitions of photography. Starting in 1908, however, he would demand that the galleries of "291"—as soon it would be affectionately termed by the public—should also be allowed open to painters, and particularly to the revolutionaries then upsetting Europe. What followed was a barrage against complacency: Matisse in 1908, the Douanier Rousseau two years later, Cezanne in 1911, while Picasso, Braque, African Negro Sculpture, Brancusi, Severini and still other incendiaries would also be presented. This campaign, it should be remembered, had its inception five and one-half seasons before the Armory Show of 1913, and it had introduced its bevy of moderns of some 167,000 visitors before its more publicized successor had opened its doors to the hordes.

Once having subdued his adversaries and thus hav-

ing transformed the pattern of the coming period—at least so far as both Post-Impressionism and Cubism were concerned—Stieglitz next unraveled some difficulties for the emerging Americans. Stieglitz—when Marsden Hartley lived on four dollars a week to paint his Maine pastorals; when John Marin lacked a gallery for his watercolors; when Max Weber and A. Walkowitz were youthful unknowns; when Arthur G. Dove faced the artist's usual dilemma upon foregoing illustration—inserted himself between them and a boiling public. Stieglitz met the press, punctured the posturings of the academic, and upheld the dignity of a difficult cause. Furthermore, acting as a voluntary (and therefore unpaid) intermediary, he cajoled collectors into nibbling at the new men's work, and thus gradually enabled the fledgling American revoltees to sustain themselves as a result of their labors.

Though "291" was extinguished by World War I, it found a rebirth later in the Intimate Gallery, and then, after the '20's, in An American Place. Always Stieglitz presided, even when, at the last, he had been forbidden to photograph any further and could continue his combats only as a semi-invalid. Even so, he had long since persuaded his countrymen into an acceptance of the painters he championed, thus giving further increment to what he had already done as a "changer" in photography and for the incoming Cubists and Post-Impressionists.

If sometimes then it would seem that he had transcended mere art and gone over into prophecy—since he always regarded the worker in a material as the essential agent for indispensable social and spiritual change

—still he, like his predecessors Paul Durand-Ruel and Ambroise Vollard, had basically committed himself to the transformation of men's tastes. And as such he, along with these, his worthy forerunners, would have added his leaven to the future.

GILBERT HIGHET was born in Scotland in 1906. He was a don at St. John's College, Oxford, from 1932 until 1938 and then became Professor of Greek and Latin at Columbia University and has been there ever since. Mr. Highet is chief book critic of Harper's Magazine. He conducts a weekly radio program of talks on modern literature which is carried by a dozen stations all over the United States. *The Classical Tradition, The Art of Teaching, People, Places, & Books,* and *Juvenal, The Satirist* are several of his books.

Kitsch

If you have ever passed an hour wandering through an antique-shop (not looking for anything exactly, but simply looking) you must have noticed how your taste gradually grows numb, and then—if you stay—becomes perverted. You begin to see unsuspected charm in those hideous pictures of plump girls fondling pigeons, you develop a psychopathic desire for spinning-wheels and cobblers' benches, you are apt to pay out good money for a bronze statuette of Otto Von Bismarck, with a metal hand inside a metal frock-coat and metal

pouches under his metallic eyes. As soon as you take the things home, you realize that they are revolting. And yet they have a sort of horrible authority; you don't like them; you know how awful they are; but it is a tremendous effort to drop them in the garbage, where they belong.

To walk along a whole street of antique-shops—that is an experience which shakes the very soul. Here is a windows full of bulbous Chinese deities; here is another littered with Zulu assegais, Indian canoe-paddles, and horse-pistols which won't fire; the next shop-front is stuffed with gaudy Italian majolica vases, and the next, even worse, with Austrian pottery—tiny ladies and gentlemen sitting on lace cushions and wearing lace ruffles, with every frill, every wrinkle and reticulation translated into porcelain: pink, stiff, but fortunately not unbreakable. The 19th Century produced an appalling amount of junky art like this, and sometimes I imagine that clandestine underground factories are continuing to pour it out like illicit drugs.

There is a name for such stuff in the trade, a word apparently of Russian origin, *kitsch*: it means vulgar showoff, and it is applied to anything that took a lot of trouble to make and is quite hideous.

It is paradoxical stuff, *kitsch*. It is obviously bad; so bad that you can scarcely understand how any human being would spend days and weeks making it, and how anybody else would buy it and take it home and keep it and dust it and leave it to his heirs. It is terribly ingenious, and terribly ugly, and utterly useless; and yet it has one of the qualities of good art—which is that, once seen, it is not easily forgotten. Of course,

it is found in all the arts: think of Milan Cathedral, or the statues in Westminster Abbey, or Liszt's settings of Schubert songs.

There is *kitsch* in the world of books also. I collect it. It is horrible, but I enjoy it. The gem of my collection is the work of the Irish novelist Mrs. Amanda McKittrick Ros, whose masterpiece, *Delina Delaney*, was published about 1900. It is a romantic tale, telling how Delina, a fisherman's daughter from Erin Cottage, was beloved by Lord Gifford, heir to Columba Castle, and after much suffering, even imprisonment, married him. The story is dramatic (not to say impossible) but it is almost lost to view under the luxuriant style. Here is a sentence in which Mrs. Ros explains that her heroine used to earn extra cash by doing needlework.

> She tried hard to assist in keeping herself a stranger to her poor old father's slight income by the use of the finest production of steel, whose blunt edge eyed the reely covering with marked greed, and offered its sharp dart to faultless fabrics of flaxen fineness.

Revolting, but distinctive. Here again is Lord Gifford saying goodbye to his sweetheart:

> My darling virgin! my queen! my Delina! I am just in time to hear the toll of a parting bell strike its heavy weight of appalling softness against the weakest fibers of a heart of love, arousing and tickling its dormant action thrusting the dart of evident separation deeper into its tubes of tenderness, and fanning the flame, already unextinguishable, into volumes of blaze.

Mrs. Ros had a remarkable command of rhetoric, and could coin a memorable phrase. She described her hero's eyes as "glittering jet revolvers"; and when he became ill, she said he fell "into a state of lofty fever"

(commoners have high fever, but lords have lofty fever). She was an astonishing writer, and I only regret that I have never seen her poetry, too. I know one volume was called *Poems of Puncture,* and I have seen the opening of her lyric written on first visiting St. Paul's Cathedral:

> Holy Moses, take a look,
> Brain and brawn in every nook!

Such genius is indestructible. Soon some earnest student will be writing a Ph.D. thesis on Mrs. Amanda McKittrick Ros, and thus (as she herself might put it) conferring on her dewy brow the laurels of concrete immortality.

Next to Mrs. Ros in my collection of *kitsch* is the work of the Scottish poet William McGonagall (fl. 1885). One stanza will show his quality. It is from a poem written after a voyage across the Atlantic:

> Oh! Mighty City of New York, you are wonderful to behold,
> Your buildings are magnificent, the truth be it told;
> They were the only thing that seemed to arrest my eye,
> Because many of them are thirteen stories high.

And here, from the same shelf, is an equally terrible poem on the same subject by our own contemporary, Ezra Pound:

> My City, my beloved,
> Thou art a maid with no breasts
> Thou art slender as a silver reed.
> Listen to me, attend me!
> And I will breathe into thee a soul,
> And thou shalt live for ever.

The essence of this kind of literary trash is incongruity. The *kitsch* writer is always sincere; he really means to say something important; he has a lofty spiritual message to bring to an unawakened world, or else he has had a powerful experience which he must communicate to others. And then, he chooses the wrong form. Either he picks an elevated and difficult style which he is not skillful enough to use, or else he constructs one of his own, mounts it, and falls off. And, worse than that, he adopts the wrong attitude to the subject—like Ezra Pound from Idaho addressing New York City as a maid with no breasts, and telling it to listen so that *he* could immortalize it. It is like climbing Mount Everest in order to carve a picture of Popeye the Sailor on the east face. It is like the Boston Philharmonic tuning up for ten minutes, and then playing "Pepsi-Cola Hits the Spot."

Bad love-poetry, bad religious poetry and prose, bad novels, both autobiographical and historical—one can form a collection of *kitsch* simply by reading with an eye wide open. College songs bristle with it. The works of Father Divine are full of it, all the more delightful because they are usually incomprehensible. Not long ago one of the Indian mystics, Sri Ramakrishna, delighted connoisseurs by describing the Indian scriptures (in a phrase which almost sets itself to *kitsch-music*) as

Fried in the butter of knowledge and steeped in the honey of love.

Bad funeral poetry is also a rich mine of the stuff. For instance, here is the opening of a jolly lament by Stephen Spender:

Death is another milestone on their way
With laughter on their lips and with winds blowing round them
They record simply
How this one excelled all others in making driving belts.

(You can see how he took Browning's *Grammarian's Funeral,* threw away the humor, the marching metre, and the humanism, and substituted a Stakhanovist speedup, plus wind).

Or take a delicious couplet from Archibald MacLeish: this describes Harry Crosby and, I suppose, Mr. Hemingway:

He walks with Ernest in the streets in Saragossa
They are drunk their mouths are hard
they say *que cosa.*

From an earlier romantic period, consider this absurd poem, in which Coleridge tried to express the profound truth that men and animals are neighbors in a hard world, but made the fundamental mistake of putting it into a monolog addressed to a donkey:

Poor Ass! Thy master should have learnt to show
Pity—best taught by fellowship of Woe!
Innocent foal! thou poor despised forlorn!
I hail thee brother—spite of the fool's scorn!
And fain would take thee with me, in the Dell
Of peace and mild Equality to dwell . . .

It is really delightfully idiotic. Once you get the taste for this kind of thing, it is possible to find pleasure in hundreds of experiences which you might have thought merely boring or anaesthetic: in bad translations, in abstract painting, in modern erotic poems. Dr. Samuel Johnson, with his strong sense of humor, had

a fancy for it, and used to repeat a poem made by "an inferiour domestick" in celebration of a nobleman's wedding:

> When the Duke of Leeds shall married be
> To a fine young lady of high quality,
> How happy will that gentlewoman be
> In his Grace of Leeds's good company.

The world is so full of masses of *kitsch* that our grasp can never exceed our reach.

You can even find this stuff in the work of writers who are normally first-rate. There is quite a lot in Shakespeare: for instance, in *The Rape of Lucrece.* Shelley drops into it pretty often. Only a few artists have an ear so delicate that they never produce it. Mozart was incapable of it, but Beethoven wrote lots of it, including what was once one of his most famous pieces, *The Battle of Vittoria.*

One of my favorite pieces of bad art is a statue in Rockefeller Center, New York. It is supposed to represent Atlas, the Titan condemned to carry the sky on his shoulders. That was an ideal of sombre, massive tragedy: greatness and suffering combined as in Hercules or Prometheus. But this version displays Atlas as a powerful moron, with a tiny little head, rather like the pan-fried young men who appear in the health magazines. Instead of supporting the heavens, he is lifting a hollow spherical metal balloon, which must weigh about 30 pounds: it is transparent, and quite empty; yet he is balancing insecurely on one foot like a furniture-mover walking upstairs with a beach-ball; and he is scowling like a mad baboon. You feel that if he ever gets the cage up, he will drop it; or else heave it onto

a Fifth Avenue bus. It is a supremely ridiculous statue, and delights me every time I see it.

Perhaps you think this is a depraved taste. But really it is an extension of experience. At one end, Homer. At the other, Amanda McKittrick Ros. At one end, *Hamlet*. At the other, McGonagall, who is best praised in his own inimitable words:

> The poetry is moral and sublime
> And in my opinion nothing could be more fine.
> True genius there does shine so bright
> Like unto the stars of night.

Creators of the Past

It is interesting to consider the differing reactions that various people receive from one work of art. There may be ten different reactions, shades of meaning, nuances of color, acceptance or rejection of the familiar or unknown. All, all these thoughts and reflections might indeed be quite unlike the effect which the artist desired. What drives the creator on? What strange need in him makes him create in spite of a small understanding audience? How lofty are his dreams and creations! How far away from mundane life! A minute fly has a distinct advantage over humans. It can see anywhich way out of its hundred eyes; and if it had intelligence, it could receive through each separate eye stimulating individual impulses.

The wise man looks for, in creation, not only an embodiment of his own personal experiences. He notes also a new view, a special oddness, a particular flavor which he may add and compress into his own mind. He may build his experience and taste beyond his beginnings. Then he can grow out of his confining environment and make his life more meaningful.

The following three excerpts from Washington Irving, Oscar Wilde and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe reveal to the reader unique literary minds. The original insight of Irving, the wit and brilliance of Wilde, and the universal poetry of Goethe are an excellent cross-section. Again, we are reminded that, throughout the centuries, thinkers, no matter what their na-

tionalities, were confronted by the same perplexing problems. They undoubtedly survived because of their dedication and their inner assurance that truth was on their side.

Fernando Puma

WASHINGTON IRVING 1783-1859

The Mutability of Literature

A COLLOQUY IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

I know that all beneath the moon decays,
And what by mortals in this world is brought,
In time's great period shall return to nought.
I know that all the muse's heavenly lays,
With toil of sprite which are so dearly bought,
As idle sounds, of few or none are sought;
That there is nothing lighter than mere praise.
—*Drummond of Hawthornden.*

There are certain half-dreaming moods of mind, in which we naturally steal away from noise and glare, and seek some quiet haunt, where we may indulge our reveries and build our air-castles undisturbed. In such a mood I was loitering about the old gray cloisters of Westminster Abbey, enjoying that luxury of wandering thought which one is apt to dignify with the name of reflection; when suddenly an interruption of madcap boys from Westminster School, playing at football, broke in upon the monastic stillness of the place, making the vaulted passages and mouldering tombs echo with their merriment. I sought to take refuge from their noise by penetrating still deeper into the solitudes of the pile, and applied to one of the vergers for admission to the library. He conducted me through a portal rich with the crumbling sculpture of former

ages, which opened upon a gloomy passage leading to the chapter-house and the chamber in which Doomsday Book is deposited. Just within the passage is a small door on the left. To this the verger applied a key; it was double-locked, and opened with some difficulty, as if seldom used. We now ascended a dark, narrow staircase, and, passing through a second door, entered the library.

I found myself in a lofty antique hall, the roof supported by massive joints of old English oak. It was soberly lighted by a row of Gothic windows at a considerable height from the floor, and which apparently opened upon the roofs of the cloisters. An ancient picture of some reverend dignitary of the Church in his robes hung over the fireplace. Around the hall and in a small gallery were the books, arranged in carved oaken cases. They consisted principally of old polemical writers, and were much more worn by time than use. In the centre of the library was a solitary table with two or three books on it, an inkstand without ink, and a few pens parched by long disuse. The place seemed fitted for quiet study and profound meditation. It was buried deep among the massive walls of the abbey, and shut up from the tumult of the world. I could only hear now and then the shouts of the schoolboys faintly swelling from the cloisters, and the sound of a bell tolling for prayers, echoing soberly along the roofs of the abbey. By degrees the shouts of merriment grew fainter and fainter, and at length died away; the bell ceased to toll, and a profound silence reigned through the dusky hall.

I had taken down a little thick quarto, curiously bound in parchment, with brass clasps, and seated

myself at the table in a venerable elbow-chair. Instead of reading, however, I was beguiled by the solemn monastic air, and lifeless quiet of the place, into a train of musing. As I looked around upon the old volumes in their mouldering covers, thus ranged on the shelves, and apparently never disturbed in their repose, I could not but consider the library a kind of literary catacomb, where authors, like mummies, are piously entombed, and left to blacken and moulder in dusty oblivion.

How much, thought I, has each of these volumes, now thrust aside with such indifference, cost some aching head! how many weary days! how many sleepless nights! How have their authors buried themselves in the solitude of cells and cloisters; shut themselves up from the face of man, and the still more blessed face of nature; and devoted themselves to painful research and intense reflection! And all for what? to occupy an inch of dusty shelf—to have the title of their works read now and then in a future age, by some drowsy churchman or casual straggler like myself; and in another age to be lost, even to remembrance. Such is the amount of this boasted immortality. A mere temporary rumor, a local sound; like the tone of that bell which has just tolled among these towers, filling the ear for a moment—lingering transiently in echo—and then passing away like a thing that was not!

While I sat half murmuring, half meditating these unprofitable speculations, with my head resting on my hand, I was thrumming with the other hand upon the quarto, until I accidentally loosened the clasps; when, to my utter astonishment, the little book gave two or three yawns, like one awaking from a deep sleep;

then a husky "hem"; and at length began to talk. At first its voice was very hoarse and broken, being much troubled by a cobweb which some studious spider had woven across it; and having probably contracted a cold from long exposure to the chills and damps of the abbey. In a short time, however, it became more distinct, and I soon found it an exceedingly fluent, conversable little tome. Its language, to be sure, was rather quaint and obsolete, and its pronunciation, what in the present day would be deemed barbarous; but I shall endeavor, as far as I am able, to render it in modern parlance.

It began with railings about the neglect of the world —about merit being suffered to languish in obscurity, and other such commonplace topics of literary repining, and complained bitterly that it had not been opened for more than two centuries. That the dean only looked now and then into the library, sometimes took down a volume or two, trifled with them for a few moments, and then returned them to their shelves. "What a plague do they mean," said the little quarto, which I began to perceive was somewhat choleric— "what a plague do they mean by keeping several thousand volumes of us shut up here, and watched by a set of old vergers, like so many beauties in a harem, merely to be looked at now and then by the dean? Books were written to give pleasure and to be enjoyed; and I would have a rule passed that the dean should pay each of us a visit at least once a year; or, if he is not equal to the task, let them once in a while turn loose the whole School of Westminster among us, that at any rate we may now and then have an airing."

"Softly, my worthy friend," replied I; "you are not

aware how much better you are off than most books of your generation. By being stored away in this ancient library, you are like the treasured remains of those saints and monarchs which lie enshrined in the adjoining chapels; while the remains of your contemporary mortals, left to the ordinary course of nature, have long since returned to dust."

"Sir," said the little tome, ruffling his leaves and looking big, "I was written for all the world, not for the bookworms of an abbey. I was intended to circulate from hand to hand, like other great contemporary works; but here have I been clasped up for more than two centuries, and might have silently fallen a prey to these worms that are playing the very vengeance with my intestines, if you had not by chance given me an opportunity of uttering a few last words before I go to pieces."

"My good friend," rejoined I, "had you been left to the circulation of which you speak, you would long ere this have been no more. To judge from your physiognomy, you are now well stricken in years; very few of your contemporaries can be at present in existence; and those few owe their longevity to being immured like yourself in old libraries; which, suffer me to add, instead of likening to harems, you might more properly and gratefully have compared to those infirmaries attached to religious establishments, for the benefit of the old and decrepit, and where, by quiet fostering and no employment, they often endure to an amazingly good-for-nothing old age. You talk of your contemporaries as if in circulation—where do we meet with their works? What do we hear of Robert Grosse-

teste, of Lincoln? No one could have toiled harder than he for immortality. He is said to have written nearly two hundred volumes. He built, as it were, a pyramid of books to perpetuate his name; but, alas! the pyramid has long since fallen, and only a few fragments are scattered in various libraries, where they are scarcely disturbed even by the antiquarian. What do we hear of Giraldus Cambrensis, the historian, antiquary, philosopher, theologian, and poet? He declined two bishoprics, that he might shut himself up and write for posterity: but posterity never inquires after his labors. What of Henry of Huntingdon, who, besides a learned history of England, wrote a treatise on the contempt of the world, which the world has revenged by forgetting him? What is quoted of Joseph of Exeter, styled the miracle of his age in classical composition? Of his three great heroic poems one is lost forever, excepting a mere fragment; the others are known only to a few of the curious in literature; and as to his love-verses and epigrams, they have entirely disappeared. What is in current use of John Wallis, the Franciscan, who acquired the name of the 'Tree of Life'? Of William of Malmesbury; of Simeon of Durham; of Benedict of Peterborough; of John Hanvill of St. Albans; of—"

"Prithee, friend," cried the quarto, in a testy tone, "how old do you think me? You are talking of authors that lived before my time, and wrote either in Latin or French, so that they in a manner expatriated themselves, and deserved to be forgotten; but I, sir, was ushered into the world from the press of the renowned Wynkyn de Worde. I was written in my own native

tongue, at a time when the language had become fixed; and indeed I was considered a model of pure and elegant English."

(I should observe that these remarks were couched in such intolerably antiquated terms, that I have had infinite difficulty in rendering them into modern phraseology.)

"I cry your mercy," said I, "for mistaking your age; but it matters little: almost all the writers of your time have likewise passed into forgetfulness; and De Worde's publications are mere literary rarities among book-collectors. The purity and stability of language, too, on which you found your claims to perpetuity, have been the fallacious dependence of authors of every age, even back to the times of the worthy Robert of Gloucester, who wrote his history in rhymes of mongrel Saxon. Even now many talk of Spenser's 'Well of pure English undefiled' as if the language ever sprang from a well or fountainhead, and was not rather a mere confluence of various tongues, perpetually subject to changes and intermixtures. It is this which has made English literature so extremely mutable, and the reputation built upon it so fleeting. Unless thought can be committed to something more permanent and unchangeable than such a medium, even thought must share the fate of everything else, and fall into decay. This should serve as a check upon the vanity and exultation of the most popular writer. He finds the language in which he has embarked his fame gradually altering, and subject to the dilapidations of time and the caprice of fashion. He looks back and beholds the early authors of his country, once the favorites of their day, supplanted by modern

writers. A few short ages have covered them with obscurity, and their merits can only be relished by the quaint taste of the bookworm. And such, he anticipates, will be the fate of his own work, which, however it may be admired in its day, and held up as a model of purity, will in the course of years grow antiquated and obsolete; until it shall become almost as unintelligible in its native land as an Egyptian obelisk, or one of those Runic inscriptions said to exist in the deserts of Tartary. I declare," added I, with some emotion, "when I contemplate a modern library, filled with new works, in all the bravery of rich gilding and binding, I feel disposed to sit down and weep; like the good Xerxes, when he surveyed his army, pranked out in all the splendor of military array, and reflected that in one hundred years not one of them would be in existence!"

"Ah," said the little quarto, with a heavy sigh, "I see how it is; these modern scribblers have superseded all the good old authors. I suppose nothing is read nowadays but Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia,' Sackville's stately plays, and 'Mirror for Magistrates,' or the fine-spun euphuisms of the 'unparalleled John Lyly.'"

"There you are again mistaken," said I; "the writers whom you suppose in vogue, because they happened to be so when you were last in circulation, have long since had their day. Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia,' the immortality of which was so fondly predicted by his admirers, and which, in truth, is full of noble thoughts, delicate images, and graceful turns of language, is now scarcely ever mentioned. Sackville has strutted into obscurity; and even Lyly, though his writings were

once the delight of a court, and apparently perpetuated by a proverb, is now scarcely known even by name. A whole crowd of authors who wrote and wrangled at the time have likewise gone down, with all their writings and their controversies. Wave after wave of succeeding literature has rolled over them, until they are buried so deep that it is only now and antiquity brings up a specimen for the gratification antiquity brings up a specimen for the gratification of the curious.

"For my part," I continued, "I consider this mutability of language a wise precaution of Providence for the benefit of the world at large, and of authors in particular. To reason from analogy, we daily behold the varied and beautiful tribes of vegetables springing up, flourishing, adorning the fields for a short time, and then fading into dust, to make way for their successors. Were not this the case, the fecundity of nature would be a grievance instead of a blessing. The earth would groan with rank and excessive vegetation, and its surface become a tangled wilderness. In like manner the works of genius and learning decline, and make way for subsequent productions. Language gradually varies, and with it fade away the writings of authors who have flourished their allotted time; otherwise, the creative powers of genius would overstock the world, and the mind would be completely bewildered in the endless mazes of literature. Formerly there were some restraints on this excessive multiplication. Works had to be transcribed by hand, which was a slow and laborious operation; they were written either on parchment, which was expensive, so that one work was often erased to make way for

another; or on papyrus, which was fragile and extremely perishable. Authorship was a limited and unprofitable craft, pursued chiefly by monks in the leisure and solitude of their cloisters. The accumulation of manuscripts was slow and costly, and confined almost entirely to monasteries. To these circumstances it may, in some measure, be owing that we have not been inundated by the intellect of antiquity; that the fountains of thought have not been broken up, and modern genius drowned in the deluge. But the inventions of paper and the press have put an end to all these restraints. They have made everyone a writer, and enabled every mind to pour itself into print, and diffuse itself over the whole intellectual world. The consequences are alarming. The stream of literature has swollen into a torrent—augmented into a river—expanded into a sea. A few centuries since five or six hundred manuscripts constituted a great library; but what would you say to libraries such as actually exist containing three or four hundred thousand volumes; legions of authors at the same time busy; and the press going on with activity, to double and quadruple the number. Unless some unforeseen mortality should break out among the progeny of the Muse, now that she has become so prolific, I tremble for posterity. I fear the mere fluctuation of language will not be sufficient. Criticism may do much. It increases with the increase of literature, and resembles one of those salutary checks on population spoken of by economists. All possible encouragement, therefore, should be given to the growth of critics, good or bad. But I fear all will be in vain; let criticism do what it may, writers will write, printers will print, and the world will in-

evitably be overstocked with good books. It will soon be the employment of a lifetime merely to learn their names. Many a man of passable information, at the present day, reads scarcely anything but reviews; and before long a man of erudition will be little better than a mere walking catalogue."

"My very good sir," said the little quarto, yawning most drearily in my face, "excuse my interrupting you, but I perceive you are rather given to prose. I would ask the fate of an author who was making some noise just as I left the world. His reputation, however, was considered quite temporary. The learned shook their heads at him, for he was a poor half-educated varlet, that knew little of Latin, and nothing of Greek, and had been obliged to run the country for deer-stealing. I think his name was Shakespeare. I presume he soon sunk into oblivion."

"On the contrary," said I, "it is owing to that very man that the literature of his period has experienced a duration beyond the ordinary term of English literature. There rise authors now and then, who seem proof against the mutability of language, because they have rooted themselves in the unchanging principles of human nature. They are like gigantic trees that we sometimes see on the banks of a stream; which, by their vast and deep roots, penetrating through the mere surface, and laying hold on the very foundations of the earth, preserve the soil around them from being swept away by the ever-flowing current, and hold up many a neighboring plant, and, perhaps, worthless weed, to perpetuity. Such is the case with Shakespeare, whom we behold defying the encroachments of time, retaining in modern use the language and literature of

his day, and giving duration to many an indifferent author, merely from having flourished in his vicinity. But even he, I grieve to say, is gradually assuming the tint of age, and his whole form is overrun by a profusion of commentators, who, like clambering vines and creepers, almost bury the whole noble plant that upholds them."

Here the little quarto began to heave his sides and chuckle, until at length he broke out in a plethoric fit of laughter that had wellnigh choked him, by reason of his excessive corpulency. "Mighty well!" cried he, as soon as he could recover breath, "mighty well! and so you would persuade me that the literature of an age is to be perpetuated by a vagabond deer-stealer! by a man without learning; by a poet, forsooth—a poet!" And here he wheezed forth another fit of laughter.

I confess that I felt somewhat nettled at this rudeness, which, however, I pardoned on account of his having flourished in a less polished age. I determined, nevertheless, not to give up my point.

"Yes," resumed I, positively, "a poet; for of all writers he has the best chance for immortality. Others may write from the head, but he writes from the heart, and the heart will always understand him. He is the faithful portrayer of nature, whose features are always the same, and always interesting. Prosewriters are voluminous and unwieldy; their pages are crowded with commonplaces, and their thoughts expanded into tediousness. But with the true poet everything is terse, touching, or brilliant. He gives the choicest thoughts in the choicest language. He illustrates them by everything that he sees most striking in nature and art. He

enriches them by pictures of human life, such as it is passing before him. His writings, therefore, contain the spirit, the aroma, if I may use the phrase, of the age in which he lives. They are caskets which enclose within a small compass the wealth of the language—its family jewels, which are thus transmitted in a portable form to posterity. The setting may occasionally be antiquated, and require now and then to be renewed, as in the case of Chaucer; but the brilliancy and intrinsic value of the gems continue unaltered. Cast a look back over the long reach of literary history. What vast valleys of dullness, filled with monkish legends and academical controversies! what bogs of theological speculations! what dreary wastes of metaphysics! Here and there only do we behold the heaven-illuminated bards, elevated like beacons on their widely separate heights, to transmit the pure light of poetical intelligence from age to age."

I was just about to launch forth into culogiums upon the poets of the day, when the sudden opening of the door caused me to turn my head. It was the verger, who came to inform me that it was time to close the library. I sought to have a parting word with the quarto, but the worthy little tome was silent; the clasps were closed; and it looked perfectly unconscious of all that had passed. I have been to the library two or three times since, and have endeavored to draw it into further conversation, but in vain; and whether all this rambling colloquy actually took place, or whether it was another of those odd day-dreams to which I am subject, I have never to this moment been able to discover.

Thorow earth and waters deepe,
  The pen by skill doth passe;
And featly nyps the worldes abuse,
  And shoes us in a glasse
The vertu and the vice
  Of every wight alyve:
The honest-comb that bee doth make
  Is not so sweet in hyve,
As are the golden leves
  That drop from poet's head!
Which doth surmount our common talke
  As farre as dross doth lead.

—"Churchyard."

OSCAR WILDE, 1854-1900

Lecture to Art Students

In the lecture which it is my privilege to deliver before you tonight I do not desire to give you any abstract definition of beauty at all. For we who are working in art cannot accept any theory of beauty in exchange for beauty itself, and, so far from desiring to isolate it in a formula appealing to the intellect, we, on the contrary, seek to materialise it in a form that gives joy to the soul through the senses. We want to create it, not to define it. The definition should follow the work: the work should not adapt itself to the definition.

Nothing, indeed, is more dangerous to the young artist than any conception of ideal beauty: he is constantly led by it either into weak prettiness or lifeless abstraction: whereas to touch the ideal at all you must not strip it of vitality. You must find it in life and recreate it in art.

While, then, on the one hand I do not desire to give you any philosophy of beauty—for, what I want tonight is to investigate how we can create art, not how we can talk of it—on the other hand, I do not wish to deal with anything like a history of English art.

To begin with, such an expression as English art is a meaningless expression. One might just as well talk of English mathematics. Art is the science of beauty, and Mathematics, the science of truth: there is no

national school of either. Indeed, a national school is a provincial school, merely. Nor is there any such thing as a school of art even. There are merely artists, that is all.

And as regards histories of art, they are quite valueless to you unless you are seeking the ostentatious oblivion of an art professorship. It is of no use to you to know the date of Perugino or the birthplace of Salvator Rosa: all that you should learn about art is to know a good picture when you see it, and a bad picture when you see it. As regards the date of the artist, all good work looks perfectly modern: a piece of Greek sculpture, a portrait of Velasquez—they are always modern, always of our time. And as regards the nationality of the artist, art is not national but universal. As regards archæology, then, avoid it altogether: archæology is merely the science of making excuses for bad art; it is the rock on which many a young artist founders and shipwrecks; it is the abyss from which no artist, old or young, ever returns. Or, if he does return, he is so covered with the dust of ages and the mildew of time, that he is quite unrecognisable as an artist, and has to conceal himself for the rest of his days under the cap of a professor, or as a mere illustrator of ancient history. How worthless archæology is in art you can estimate by the fact of its being so popular. Popularity is the crown of laurel which the world puts on bad art. Whatever is popular is wrong.

As I am not going to talk to you, then, about the philosophy of the beautiful, or the history of art, you will ask me what I am going to talk about. The subject of my lecture tonight is what makes an artist and

what does the artist make; what are the relations of the artist to his surroundings, what is the education the artist should get, and what is the quality of a good work of art.

Now, as regards the relations of the artist to his surroundings, by which I mean the age and country in which he is born. All good art, as I said before, has nothing to do with any particular century; but this universality is the quality of the work of art; the conditions that produce that quality are different. And what, I think, you should do is to realise completely your age in order completely to abstract yourself from it; remembering that if you are an artist at all, you will be not the mouthpiece of a century, but the master of eternity; that all art rests on a principle, and that mere temporal considerations are no principle at all; and that those who advise you to make your art representative of the nineteenth century are advising you to produce an art which your children, when you have them, will think old-fashioned. But you will tell me this is an inartistic age, and we are an inartistic people, and the artist suffers much in this nineteenth century of ours.

Of course he does. I, of all men, am not going to deny that. But remember that there never has been an artistic age, or an artistic people, since the beginning of the world. The artist has always been, and will always be, an exquisite exception. There is no golden age of art; only artists who have produced what is more golden than gold.

What, you will say to me, the Greeks? were not they an artistic people?

Well, the Greeks certainly not, but, perhaps, you

mean the Athenians, the citizens of one out of a thousand cities.

Do you think that they were an artistic people? Take them even at the time of their highest artistic development, the latter part of the fifth century before Christ, when they had the greatest poets and the greatest artists of the antique world, when the Parthenon rose in loveliness at the bidding of a Phidias, and the philosopher spake of wisdom in the shadow of the painted portico, and tragedy swept in the perfection of pageant and pathos across the marble of the stage. Were they an artistic people then? Not a bit of it. What is an artistic people but a people who love their artists and understand their art? The Athenians could do neither.

How did they treat Phidias? To Phidias we owe the great era, not merely in Greek, but in all art—I mean of the introduction of the use of the living model.

And what would you say if all the English bishops, backed by the English people, came down from Exeter Hall to the Royal Academy one day and took off Sir Frederick Leighton in a prison van to Newgate on the charge of having allowed you to make use of the living model in your designs for sacred pictures?

Would you not cry out against the barbarism and the Puritanism of such an idea? Would you not explain to them that the worst way to honour God is to dishonour man who is made in His image, and is the work of His hands; and, that if one wants to paint Christ one must take the most Christlike person one can find, and if one wants to paint the Madonna, the purest girl one knows?

Would you not rush off and burn down Newgate, if

necessary, and say that such a thing was without parallel in history?

Without parallel? Well, that is exactly what the Athenians did.

In the room of the Parthenon marbles, in the British Museum, you will see a marble shield on the wall. On it there are two figures; one of a man whose face is half hidden, the other of a man with the godlike lineaments of Pericles. For having done this, for having introduced into a bas relief, taken from Greek sacred history, the image of the great statesman who was ruling Athens at the time, Phidias was flung into prison and there, in the common gaol of Athens, died, the supreme artist of the old world.

And do you think that this was an exceptional case? The sign of a Philistine age is the cry of immorality against art, and this cry was raised by the Athenian people against every great poet and thinker of their day—Æschylus, Euripides, Socrates. It was the same with Florence in the thirteenth century. Good handicrafts are due to guilds, not to the people. The moment the guilds lost their power and the people rushed in, beauty and honesty of work died.

And so, never talk of an artistic people; there never has been such a thing.

But, perhaps you will tell me that the external beauty of the world has almost entirely passed away from us, that the artist dwells no longer in the midst of the lovely surroundings which, in ages past, were the natural inheritance of every one, and that art is very difficult in this unlovely town of ours, where, as you go to your work in the morning, or return from it at eventide, you have to pass through street after

street of the most foolish and stupid architecture that the world has ever seen; architecture, where every lovely Greek form is desecrated and defiled, and every lovely Gothic form defiled and desecrated, reducing three-fourths of the London houses to being, merely, like square boxes of the vilest proportions, as gaunt as they are grimy, and as poor as they are pretentious —the hall door always of the wrong colour, and the windows of the wrong size, and where, even when wearied of the houses you turn to contemplate the street itself, you have nothing to look at but chimney-pot hats, men with sandwich boards, vermilion letter-boxes, and do that even at the risk of being run over by an emerald-green omnibus.

Is not art difficult, you will say to me, in such surroundings as these? Of course it is difficult, but then art was never easy; you yourselves would not wish it to be easy; and, besides, nothing is worth doing except what the world says is impossible.

Still, you do not care to be answered merely by a paradox. What are the relations of the artist to the external world, and what is the result of the loss of beautiful surroundings to you, is one of the most important questions of modern art; and there is no point on which Mr. Ruskin so insists as that the decadence of art has come from the decadence of beautiful things; and that when the artist cannot feed his eye on beauty, beauty goes from his work.

I remember in one of his lectures, after describing the sordid aspect of a great English city, he draws for us a picture of what were the artistic surroundings long ago.

Think, he says, in words of perfect and picturesque

imagery, whose beauty I can but feebly echo, think of what was the scene which presented itself, in his afternoon walk, to a designer of the Gothic school of Pisa—Nino Pisano or any of his men:*

On each side of a bright river he saw rise a line of brighter palaces, arched and pillared, and inlaid with deep red porphyry, and with serpentine; along the quays before their gates were riding troops of knights, noble in face and form, dazzling in crest and shield; horse and man one labyrinth of quaint colour and gleaming light—the purple, and silver, and scarlet fringes flowing over the strong limbs and clashing mail, like sea-waves over rocks at sunset. Opening on each side from the river were gardens, courts, and cloisters; long successions of white pillars among wreaths of vine; leaping of fountains through buds of pomegranate and orange: and still along the garden-paths, and under and through the crimson of the pomegranate shadows, moving slowly, groups of the fairest women that Italy ever saw—fairest, because purest and thoughtfullest; trained in all high knowledge, as in all courteous art—in dance, in song, in sweet wit, in lofty learning, in loftier courage, in loftiest love—able alike to cheer, to enchant, or save, the souls of men. Above all this scenery of perfect human life, rose dome and belltower, burning with white alabaster and gold: beyond dome and belltower the slopes of mighty hills hoary with olive; far in the north, above a purple sea of peaks of solemn Apennine, the clear, sharp-cloven Carrara mountains sent up their steadfast flames of marble summit into amber sky; the great sea itself, scorching with expanse of light, stretching from their feet to the Gorgonian isles; and over all these, ever present, near or far—seen through the leaves of vine, or imaged with all its march of clouds in the Arno's stream, or set with its depth of blue close against the golden hair and burning cheek of lady and knight,—that untroubled

* *The Two Paths,* Lect. 111. p. 123 (1859 ed.).

and sacred sky, which was to all men, in those days of innocent faith, indeed the unquestioned abode of spirits, as the earth was of men; and which opened straight through its gates of cloud and veils of dew into the awfulness of the eternal world;—a heaven in which every cloud that passed was literally the chariot of an angel, and every ray of its Evening and Morning streamed from the throne of God.

What think you of that for a school of design?

And then look at the depressing, monotonous appearance of any modern city, the sombre dress of men and women, the meaningless and barren architecture, the colourless and dreadful surroundings. Without a beautiful national life, not sculpture merely, but all the arts will die.

Well, as regards the religious feeling of the close of the passage, I do not think I need speak about that. Religion springs from religious feeling, art from artistic feeling: you never get one from the other; unless you have the right root you will not get the right flower; and, if a man sees in a cloud the chariot of an angel, he will probably paint it very unlike a cloud.

But, as regards the general idea of the early part of that lovely bit of prose, is it really true that beautiful surroundings are necessary for the artist? I think not; I am sure not. Indeed, to me the most inartistic thing in this age of ours is not the indifference of the public to beautiful things, but the indifference of the artist to the things that are called ugly. For, to the real artist, nothing is beautiful or ugly in itself at all. With the facts of the object he has nothing to do, but with its appearance only, and appearance is a matter of light and shade, of masses, of position, and of value.

Appearance is, in fact, a matter of effect merely, and and it is with the effects of nature that you have to deal, not with the real condition of the object. What you, as painters, have to paint is not things as they are but things as they seem to be, not things as they are but things as they are not.

No object is so ugly that, under certain conditions of light and shade, or proximity to other things, it will not look beautiful; no object is so beautiful that, under certain conditions, it will not look ugly. I believe that in every twenty-four hours what is beautiful looks ugly, and what is ugly looks beautiful, once.

And, the commonplace character of so much of our English painting seems to me due to the fact that so many of our young artists look merely at what we may call "ready-made beauty," whereas you exist as artists not to copy beauty but to create it in your art, to wait and watch for it in nature.

What would you say of a dramatist who would take nobody but virtuous people as characters in his play? Would you not say he was missing half of life? Well, of the young artist who paints nothing but beautiful things, I say he misses one half of the world.

Do not wait for life to be picturesque, but try and see life under picturesque conditions. These conditions you can create for yourself in your studio, for they are merely conditions of light. In nature, you must wait for them, watch for them, choose them; and, if you wait and watch, come they will.

In Gower Street at night you may see a letter-box that is picturesque: on the Thames Embankment you may see picturesque policemen. Even Venice is not always beautiful, nor France.

To paint what you see is a good rule in art, but to see what is worth painting is better. See life under pictorial conditions. It is better to live in a city of changeable weather than in a city of lovely surroundings.

Now, having seen what makes the artist, and what the artist makes, who is the artist? There is a man living amongst us who unites in himself all the qualities of the noblest art, whose work is a joy for all time, who is, himself, a master of all time. That man is Mr. Whistler.

But, you will say, modern dress, that is bad. If you cannot paint black cloth you could not have painted silken doublet. Ugly dress is better for art—facts of vision, not of the object.

What is a picture? Primarily, a picture is a beautifully coloured surface, merely, with no more spiritual message or meaning for you than an exquisite fragment of Venetian glass or a blue tile from the wall of Damascus. It is, primarily, a purely decorative thing, a delight to look at.

All archæological pictures that make you say "How curious!" all sentimental pictures that make you say "How sad!" all historical pictures that make you say "How interesting!" all pictures that do not immediately give you such artistic joy as to make you say "How beautiful!" are bad pictures.

We never know what an artist is going to do. Of course not. The artist is not a specialist. All such divisions as animal painters, landscape painters, painters of Scotch cattle in an English mist, painters of English

cattle in a Scotch mist, racehorse painters, bull-terrier painters, all are shallow. If a man is an artist he can paint everything.

The object of art is to stir the most divine and remote of the chords which make music in our soul; and colour is, indeed, of itself a mystical presence on things, and tone a kind of sentinel.

Am I pleading, then, for mere technique? No. As long as there are any signs of technique at all, the picture is unfinished. What is finish? A picture is finished when all traces of work, and of the means employed to bring about the result, have disappeared.

In the case of handicraftsmen—the weaver, the potter, the smith—on their work are the traces of their hand. But it is not so with the painter; it is not so with the artist.

Art should have no sentiment about it but its beauty, no technique except what you cannot observe. One should be able to say of a picture not that it is "well painted," but that it is "not painted."

What is the difference between absolutely decorative art and a painting? Decorative art emphasises its material: imaginative art annihilates it. Tapestry shows its threads as part of its beauty: a picture annihilates its canvas: it shows nothing of it. Porcelain emphasises its glaze: water-colours reject the paper.

A picture has no meaning but its beauty, no message but its joy. That is the first truth about art that you must never lose sight of. A picture is a purely decorative thing.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE
1749-1832

Concerning Truth and the Appearance of Truth in Works of Art

On the stage of a German theater, an oval-formed set, somewhat like an amphitheater, was presented; in its painted loges were the painted figures of spectators, suggesting that they might be participating in what was going on in the play.* Some of the actual spectators in the parterre and boxes were displeased by this set and were annoyed that they should be subjected to something so patently "untrue" and without even the "appearance of truth." On this occasion, a conversation took place, which ran approximately as follows:

The Artists' Spokesman: Let us see if we cannot somehow come to a little closer understanding.

Spectator: I don't see how you can possibly hope to excuse such a representation.

Spokesman: When you go to the theater, you don't expect that everything you see there should be "true" and "real," do you?

Spectator: No. But I demand that everything should at least *seem* to be true and real.

Spokesman: Forgive me if I contradict you and say that, in your heart of hearts, you don't really demand that at all.

* Translated by John Evarts.

Spectator: That would be indeed strange. If I didn't demand that, why should the scene designer go to the trouble of drawing his lines according to all the laws of perspective and of painting all objects in their most perfect form? Why does one study costumes? Why bother to go to such great expense to achieve accuracy in the costumes so that I may be transported convincingly to the period of the play? Why is it, then, that people give the greatest praise to the actor who expresses the emotions most truthfully—who seems to come closest to the "truth" in his speech and posture and gestures, and who best deceives me into believing that I am watching the thing itself instead of an imitation?

Spokesman: You express yourself very well. Only, it's more difficult than you think, perhaps, to see with real clarity how one feels. What would you say if I told you that no theatrical productions actually seem true to you and that they seem only to have the appearance of truth?

Spectator: I would say that you are bringing up subtleties of meaning which only amount to hair-splitting.

Spokesman: And I will answer you that in discussing the effects of anything on our feelings, no words can be too delicate or subtle, and that hair-splitting of this sort indicates a need of the spirit. Since we are not at all precisely articulate about what takes place within ourselves, our mind seeks to clarify the questions by dealing with them from two opposed views, answering them from two sides, and, thereby, perhaps, finding the true answer in the center, so to speak.

Spectator: Very well. But then, try to explain what you mean a little more clearly, and with some examples, if you don't mind.

Spokesman: I can easily give you some, which will support my point of view. For example, then: when you go to the opera, don't you experience a lively and complete pleasure?

Spectator: One of the most complete pleasures I know of, if everything blends harmoniously.

Spokesman: But if the good people on the other side of the footlights meet each other and greet each other singing, and sing their dialougue, and express their love and hate and all their passions in singing, fight each other and part from each other while singing, can you possibly say that the whole performance or even a part of it seems really true to life? Or, I might say, that it even has the appearance of truth?

Spectator: You're quite right. When I think of it, I certainly couldn't say that it has. Actually, none of it seems to be true.

Spokesman: And still, you are completely charmed and pleased by it.

Spectator: I can't deny it. And I well remember how people tried to ridicule the opera precisely because of its heavy-handed improbability and how, in spite of their scorn, I always found the greatest pleasure in opera, and find more all the time, as it becomes richer and more perfect.

Spokesman: And don't you feel completely deceived at the opera?

Spectator: Deceived? Well, I wouldn't like to use just

that word . . . I don't know . . . Maybe yes, but still, maybe no.

Spokesman: Now you're caught in a complete contradiction, which seems to be much worse than a question of hair-splitting.

Spectator: Don't get excited. We want to get some clarity on the matter.

Spokesman: As soon as we have clarity, we'll be in agreement. Will you permit me at this point in our argument to ask you a few questions?

Spectator: It's your duty to do so. Now that you've questioned me into this state of confusion, you must question me out of it.

Spokesman: You don't very much like calling what you experience in the opera deception, do you?

Spectator: No, not very much, but still, it's something like that, something very closely realated to it.

Spokesman: At the opera, you almost forget yourself, don't you?

Spectator: Not almost, but entirely, if the whole or even part of it is really good.

Spokesman: Have you been thrilled by it?

Spectator: More than once.

Spokesman: Can you tell me under what circumstances?

Spectator: There have been so many times that it would be very difficult to enumerate them all.

Spokesman: But you have admitted that you were thrilled; and most, of course, when everything went together harmoniously.

Spectator: I can't deny it.

Spokesman: Did such a perfect performance corres-

pond within itself, or with something in Nature?

Spectator: Within itself, unquestionably.

Spokesman: And this unity within itself was, nevertheless, a work of art?

Spectator: Yes, certainly.

Spokesman: A minute ago, we denied that opera resembles reality; we claimed that it presented what it was imitating in a way that did not at all have the appearance of truth. Can we, however, deny that it has an inner truth which arises from its characteristics as a work of art?

Spectator: If an opera is good, it really creates its own little world, in which everything happens according to certain laws; a world which must be judged by its own laws and felt according to its own characteristics.

Spokesman: Shouldn't we draw the conclusion, then, that truth in Nature and truth in Art are quite different things and that the artist should in no way strive to make his creation seem to be a work of nature?

Spectator: But it does seem to us so often to be a work of nature.

Spokesman: That is true, too. But may I be quite open and frank with you?

Spectator: Why not? After all, we are not engaged in paying compliments to each other.

Spokesman: Then I will be bold enough to say that a work of art can seem to be a work of nature only to the most uneducated spectator, and such a spectator, even if he is only at the most rudimentary stage, is also very valuable to the artist. Unfortunately,

though, such a person will be satisfied with the artist only as long as he plays down to him; he will never try to raise himself to the level of the true artist, when the latter, driven on by his genius, begins to perfect his work to the fullest extent.

Spectator: That sounds rather strange, but it's conceivable.

Spokesman: You wouldn't like to hear it if you yourself hadn't already reached a higher level of appreciation.

Spectator: Well, let me now try to put some order in what we've been discussing and try to make some progress. Let me be the questioner now.

Spokesman: I would prefer you to be.

Spectator: A work of art, you say, can seem like a work of nature only to an uneducated person.

Spokesman: You must remember about the bird that flew in to eat the cherries from the painting of a great master.

Spectator: Well, doesn't that prove that the fruit was surperbly painted?

Spokesman: Not at all! It proves to me, much more, that these admirers were real sparrows.

Spectator: Nevertheless, I can't help feeling that such a painting must be really excellent.

Spokesman: Shall I tell you a more recent story?

Spectator: I usually prefer to listen to a story rather than to pure reasoning.

Spokesman: A great natural scientist had among his household pets a monkey. One day, the monkey disappeared; after a long search, he finally found the animal in the library. There sat the monkey on the floor; he had spread all around him the engravings

of an unbound work on natural science. Astonished by this apparently eager scholarship on the part of his pet, the master came nearer and saw to his amazement and to his regret that the monkey, who loved nibbling at things, had dined off the whole collection of beetles and bugs he had found pictured in the book.

Spectator: The story is certainly quite funny.

Spokesman: And pertinent as well, I hope. You wouldn't place these colored engravings of beetles on a par with the picture of the great master, would you?

Spectator: Not very easily. No.

Spokesman: And you *would* include the monkey among the uneducated amateurs?

Spectator: Yes, indeed; and among the greedy ones, as well. But you have given me a curious idea. Isn't it just for this reason that the uneducated amateur demands that a work of art be like nature, so that he can absorb it only in a "natural," often crude and vulgar way?

Spokesman: I agree with you completely.

Spectator: And for this reason, you claim that an artist lowers himself if he aims only at achieving this effect.

Spokesman: Precisely.

Spectator: But I still feel that there is some sort of contradiction here. You have already done me the honor of including me among the half-educated amateurs of art.

Spokesman: Among the amateurs who are on the way to becoming connoisseurs.

Spectator: Well, tell me then: why is it that a great work of art also seems to be a work of nature?

Spokesman: Because it appeals to your higher nature, because it is surpra-natural but not "extra-natural." A perfect work of art is a product of the human spirit and in this sense it is also a work of nature. But to the extent that separate parts are brought together in a unified whole, wherein the most minute and ordinary objects are given meaning and dignity, the work is greater than nature. It must be conceived by a man whose spirit is harmonious and educated; this artist then finds the ideal material, the stuff which is complete in itself, according to his own nature. The ordinary amateur has no conception of this; he treats a work of art as he does any object he might come across in the market place; but the true amateur sees not only the truth of the objects presented, but also the superior qualities of what has been chosen, the cleverness with which they have been fitted together, the supra-natural qualities of a little world of art; he feels that he must lift himself to the point of view of the artist in order to enjoy the work; he feels that he must compose his distracted life, live with and come to know a work of art, regard it frequently, and thereby heighten the value and quality of his own existence.

Spectator: Good, my friend. I have had very similar feelings in regard to paintings and theater performances and other forms of poetical expression, and I have had a vague idea of what you are asking of the true amateur. In the future, I shall try to be even more attentive to myself and to the works of art; if I remember correctly, though, we have digressed a

long ways from our point of departure. You wanted to convince me that I should tolerate the painted human figures on the stage set of our opera house. And even though we have come to an agreement about these other ideas, I still don't see how you can defend the license of these painted figures or how you intend me to understand them.

Spokesman: Fortunately, the opera is going to be repeated tonight, and you certainly won't want to miss it, will you?

Spectator: By no means.

Spokesman: And the painted figures?

Spectator: Well, they won't scare me off, because I consider myself a little better than a sparrow.

Spokesman: I hope that a mutual interest will bring us together again soon.

WORLD LITERATURE

It is very clear that for some time now, the efforts of the best poets and esthetic writers have been directed toward the universally human. In every field, whether it be historical, mythological, legendary or more or less arbitrarily chosen, one can see more and more the universal shining through the national or the personal.

A similar spirit is to be found in practical, everyday life, and it diffuses a softening effect upon all the earthy crudity, savagery, cruelty, falseness, self-interest and mendacity around us; but, of course, one cannot hope that a period of general world peace is beginning, but, still, that unavoidable conflict will become less intense, war less horrible, and victories less arrogant.

What points this way in the poetry of all nations—this it is that the others should make part of themselves. One must come to know the special characteristics of a country in order to accept them and precisely thereby, to deal with a country; the distinctive qualities of a nation are like their language and money mints: they make interchange easier; in fact, they are essential for any interchanges whatsoever.

A genuine, universal tolerance can be most surely achieved if one accepts the distinctive characteristics of single individuals and of peoples, keeping in mind the conviction that the really valuable qualities belong to mankind in general. The Germans have already contributed for a long time to such a mediation between peoples and toward a mutual recognition. He who understands the German language and studies it, is really in the world market, where all nations offer their wares, and he plays the role of interpreter, thereby enriching himself, as well.

And one should regard every "translator" in this way, in that he seeks to be an intermediary of this general spiritual "commerce," and makes it his business to foster and encourage mutual exchange. For, whatever one may say against the awkwardness and inadequacy of a translation, it remains, nevertheless, one of the most important and worthiest occupations in the general field of world relations.

The Koran says: "God gave every people a prophet in their own language." And every translator is a prophet among his own people. Luther's translation of the Bible has had the greatest possible effect, even if the critics continue to make reservations about it and complain to this very day. And what is the whole

enormous task of the Bible Society if it is not to make the Holy Book available to every people, in their own language and manner?

If now, with the ever increasing speed of communication, such a world literature is inevitable and will soon be created, we could not expect of it, however, more or anything different than what it can and does provide.

No matter how wide and distant the wide world may be, it remains always an extended homeland; and, precisely considered, it can produce no more than what an individual land contributes to it; what interests the masses will be limitlessly broadened and extended, and, as we already observe, will find response in all zones and areas; this will not be generally true for the serious and really skillful artist; nevertheless, those who have dedicated themselves to higher things and to the production of works of higher value, will come to know each other better and more quickly. Throughout the whole world there are such men, who deeply concerned with the established works, and, consequently, with the true progress of mankind. But the road which they follow, the pace which they establish, are not for everyone; the men of action want progress to be more rapid and therefore refuse to accept, and they even obstruct, the very advances which might foster their own progress and interests. The people of serious purpose must therefore create a quiet, modest "community" among themselves, for it would be futile to try to oppose the broad stream of public opinion; but they must stand courageously by their opinions, until the stream will have quieted down.

The chief consolation of such men—indeed, the most cheering encouragement—must be found in the fact that the True is also actually the most useful; when they discover the connection between the two, themselves, and can demonstrate and indicate this influence in lively fashion, then they will not fail to influence men most persuasively for many years to come.

Excerpts from

TRAVEL YEARS OF WILHELM MEISTER

For all living, for all doing, for all art, one must first have professional training, and it can be achieved only through limitation. To know and practise one thing well gives one a higher level of culture than a half-knowledge of hundreds of things. In the school where I am taking you now, they have separated all the activities; a student is tested at every step; and in this way, they can recognize the direction in which his natural talents move him; even though, in the process, his diffused wishes may cause him to turn to a variety of matters. But wise teachers give youth a rather free hand to find what suits their natures; they simply shorten the detours through which a person is all too easily inclined to wander.

Approaching the buildings of the school, the travellers hear the singing of the students. Their guide explains the special importance given to music and singing in the school. (ed. note.)

"In our school, singing is the first step in education; everything else ties up with it and is at first taught through the activity of singing. The simplest pleasure as well as the simplest lessons are made livelier and

impressive through the use of song; indeed, even the simplest elements of religious or moral teaching that we include are communicated through song; other advantages for the development of active skills follow logically: for, when the children practice, we teach them to write the notes on the blackboard and then to sing back the notes that they have written and to read the texts of the songs as well; in this way, they simultaneously exercise their hands and ears and eyes, and make quicker progress in learning to write well than you would think possible; and since all of this music must be sung in precise measures and notated with exactitude, the children grasp the great importance of the science of measuring and reckoning much more rapidly than in any other way. For this reason, we have chosen music from among many other possible subjects as the first medium of education, because from it, paths lead out in all directions."

Wilhelm, interested in learning more, did not conceal his amazement that he could hear no instrumental music. "That field is not at all neglected," his companion answered, "but it is carried on in another area . . . in a little valley nearby; and over there, care is taken that instruction on different instruments is given in separate little settlements. And beginners, with their sour notes, are assigned to isolated hermitages, where they will drive no one out of their minds; because, you must admit that in comfortable, bourgeois living conditions, there is scarcely a more dismal misery to put up with than to have a beginning flutist or violinist in the neighborhood."

One of his guides explains a central purpose of education. (ed. note.)

"Well-born, healthy children," he continued, "bring a great deal with them into life; Nature has already given them, for the most part, everything that they may need in the long run; it is our duty to develop these natural gifts, but quite often they develop better by themselves. But there is one thing that no one brings with him into the world—and yet it is that very quality which is all-essential for a person to become a real human being. If you know what I mean, say it."

Wilhelm thought for a minute and then shook his head. After another short silence, his companion said: "Respect!" Wilhelm looked surprised. "Respect in the sense of awe," his companion repeated. "Everyone lacks it to begin with; even you yourself."

The headmaster of the school explains one of the general philosophical and social aims of education. (ed. note.)

"We do not wish to detract from the praise due and given to the sanctity of home and family; self-confidence in the individual is based upon it, and firmness of character and dignity grow from it; but it no longer goes far enough; we must grasp the conception of world sanctity; we must broaden the horizon of our human interests in practical relationships and not only seek to help our neighbor but to include all of mankind.

Concerning the importance of learning foreign languages. (ed. note.)

"We were influenced in arranging our practise of languages by the fact that we have here young students from all parts of the world. To guard against the tendency which one finds in other parts of the world of a foreign group sticking closely together and sepa-

rating from groups from other nations, we seek to bring them into a closer understanding through the simple medium of learning each other's languages.

"A general training in different languages, however, is most necessary, because any foreigner likes to be able not only to converse a little in the familiar expressions of his own language in a festive market place, but also to haggle and bargain easily. To avoid a harmful sort of Babylonian confusion of tongues, a single language is spoken by everyone each month throughout the year, in keeping with the principle that no one should worry his mind about anything except the subjects especially chosen."

Concerning genius. (ed. note.)

"What seems to justify our severe demands and strict regulations is the fact that precisely the genius, the individual with natural born talent, is the first to comprehend them and the most willing to follow them. Only those with little talent would like to present their limited specialty as an absolute whole and they justify their maladroit efforts under the pretense of indisputable originality and independence. We do not allow this and we seek to protect a student from such false paths, whereby the greater part of his life or sometimes all his life may be confused or dissipated.

"We prefer above all to deal with a genius, for he is blessed by a good spirit, which enables him to recognize early what is useful to him. He understands that art is called art precisely because it is not nature."

ALBERT BASSERMANN, 1867-1951. These short pieces are a tribute to one of the greatest actors of all time.

Do You Know Albert Bassermann?

It seems that posterity, which, according to Goethe has no flowers for the actor (*"Dem Mimen flicht die Nachwelt keine Kränze"*), will make an exception for Albert Bassermann. Several biographies are being written to preserve for posterity the memory of this actor whom a New York critic called the greatest of all times.

People have often wondered why he never gave a party or attended one. Even official festivities in his honor had to take place in his absence. When, for instance, the city of Mannheim resolved to bestow upon him its honorary freedom, he wrote that as much as he appreciated this honor he could not accept it if his personal attendance was required. The explanation of this strict privacy was as simple as it was beautiful. It was his ideal concept of marriage. Husband and wife were, during forty-four years, never separated for a single day.

For Else Bassermann he was both a child and a sage; for him she was a Cosima, but of a rather more cheerful than tragic kind. Wherever Bassermann, his wife and their daughter lived, they built themselves their own fancy world, peopled by imaginary children to whom Bassermann gave names—"Jenny," "the Spring

Child," or "Hobbelbobbel," as the last one of them was called. These chlidren shared the family life and, by their invisible presence, helped to make daily life cheerful.

Mrs. Else Bassermann recently described, in a talk at Buehlerhoehe, a "normal day" with Bassermann. It is characteristic that no place was mentioned in this moving report. The Bassermanns were as much at home in New York as in Zurich, Berlin, or London. If one remembers Bassermann as the grand seigneur among the actors of the world, one essential trait of his nature seems to contradict such a characterization —his cheerfulness. Whenever he awoke in the morning he started the day by singing "Holldrioho," so that hotel personnel often believed him to be a singer. When his bath was ready, he always liked to have it announced with "Bad is ferrtig, Herrr," a remembrance of an incident in Budapest, which amused him again and again. He had that quality that one finds only in simple people and in geniuses: he was able to really enjoy the slightest things.

It may seem strange that Bassermann was a great movie fan. In every town where the little family Bassermann stayed, the visit to the cinema was an important item on the daily agenda. For he always wanted seats in the middle of the first row, and since these cheap seats are not numbered, it was necessary to buy the tickets early and to come on time. In such movie theaters he was not Albert Bassermann but "Hobbelbobbel," the naughty child of his fantasy, who first whined and wanted to go home because the film had not yet started, but later was the most interested spectator. By the way, Bassermann never depreciated an-

other actor; he had a good word even for the worst actor.

His own career was not accomplished without endless work. To be able to play his roles in English he studied even in his seventies and solved innumerable English crossword puzzles.

It was his uncle, August Bassermann, who had evoked the love of theatre in his youth. August Bassermann had been a cavalry officer before he became an actor and later intendant of the grandducal theatre at Mannheim. The fifteen years during which he was the director of this theatre belong to its most splendid times. He had a beautiful voice, and he predicted to his nephew that he would never succeed on the stage "with his hoarse and shaky voice," a prophecy later strongly contradicted by life. In spite of it, Albert Bassermann tried to become an actor, but not by way of a dramatic school. He started at the theatres of Heidelberg, Meiningen, and Bern. His rapid ascent to fame began in Berlin.

The cheerful pride he took in his success, besides his cultivated modesty, showed for instance in an improvisation he inserted in his role as theatre director Striese in "The Rape of the Sabine Women." He asked a young actor wanting to join the troupe: "Do you know Albert Bassermann? I am his disciple."

He never lost what he called "the melody of Mannheim;" even his English preserved the accent of the home town in the Palatinate, which came through in all his roles.

He came from a family that was so strongly connected with the history of Mannheim as scarcely any other one and that produced eminent persons in vari-

ous fields: merchants, artists, scholars, musicians, politicians. The father of his grandmother, Gabriele, was mayor of the city. The tomb of the family in the Mannheim cemetery is, with its widely ramified family tree, a symbol of the manifold activity of the Bassermanns.

Mrs. Else Bassermann, the venerable widow of the great actor, concluded her report at Buehlerhoehe with the words: "The rest is silence." But this silence was preceded by the voice of heaven: when at the cremation in Zurich the coffin slowly disappeared in the background, the thunderclap of a storm over the lake gave off a sound like a cello.

DEATH AT THE TEA TABLE

by Madame Bassermann

It was a beautiful April morning in New York. Central Park was green, and white and yellow blossoms showed on the shrubbery. I was sad as I looked down from our window, for my husband was ill and unable to enjoy the splendid spring.

The telephone rang and Mrs. Barnowski, the wife of the former director of the Lessing Theatre in Berlin, asked whether she and her husband could come in the afternoon; they intended to return to Germany and her husband had acquired a "hit," a comedy with a superb role for my husband—"Don Juan and the Devil." I agreed at once and told my husband. A shadow came over his face and he asked me with a small, sad voice, "Do you believe that I shall be all right then?" I laughed at that and said, "In September?

By then, darling, you will be your old self." At that he, too, smiled and looked forward to the visit.

For the tea hour I had prepared everything, cake and salt biscuits and plums from South America, which my husband especially liked. But when Mr. Barnowski came, I realized at first sight that he was very ill; his face was yellow and hollow and he walked with a stoop. But he had dressed very carefully as he always did, and he took great pains to conceal his poor health.

We sat down to tea. The two gentlemen were carried away by common reminiscences—an Egmont evening, and Ibsen and Dehmel performances came to life again. And they felt young and healthy. The new plans were discussed, contracts made, roles distributed. But some one sat at the table whom we did not see and who nevertheless was sure of his prey: Death. First he took the theatre director and then his great actor.

In parting, Barnowski took one more plum and asked me, "How did you know that I like these plums so much? Did you want to bribe me into starring you?" I could not answer because his wife had told me how ill he was.

When the gentlemen shook hands, saying "Meet you in Europe," my blood ran cold; I sensed that there would be no meeting.

Soon afterwards Barnowsky died, and eight days later my husband.

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